



## NEHRU AND THE MODERN WORLD



## Opening Statement

by

MAHDI ELMANDJRA, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR-GENERAL, UNESCO

It is a great honour and a privilege for me to open on behalf of Unesco this Round Table on "Jawaharlal Nehru's Role in the Modern World." I would like however to say, Mr. President, how much Mr. Rene Maheu, Director-General of Unesco, regrets not being able to be present on this great occasion. He regrets it even more so as he is fully aware of the great contribution of Jawaharlal Nehru, whom he knew personally, to the aims and activities of the Organization. He sends you his greetings as well as his best wishes for the success of this Round Table.

To set the purpose of this meeting, Mr. President, allow me to quote from the Resolution which was voted by 120 Member States during the 13th session of the General Conference in 1964:

*"Having weighed the loss of India, to the world and to Unesco of this pioneer in international reconciliation and this guide for all those who work toward greater international understanding and co-operation;*

*"Assembled once again to carry out the fundamental aims of Unesco which by its Constitution is dedicated to the intellectual and moral solidarity of mankind; and*

*"Believing that in our world of tensions and divisions, now deprived of his physical presence, the name and spirit of Jawaharlal Nehru should live;*

*"Declares that it is altogether fitting that Unesco, which Jawaharlal Nehru befriended so early in its history and helped to foster to the end of his days, should commemorate his name and his spirit in a living memorial which would carry forward this great task;*

*"Requests that a round table be organized on Jawaharlal Nehru's role in the modern world. These debates would bring together thinkers, philosophers, scientists, educationists, writers, artists and publicists, from all over the world, to consider some of the great themes of human civilization which distinguish eastern and western cultures and reveal their common bonds;*

*"Expresses the hope that, on that occasion, consideration will be given to means of paying a more lasting tribute to the name and spirit of Nehru;*

*"Suggests that the International Advisory Committee on the Major Project be made responsible for preparing this round table and considering its implications."*

Mr. President, I think that the Director-General, in very close co-operation with the Indian National Commission for Unesco, has fulfilled the objectives which were required by this Resolution and we have now been able to assemble these thinkers and scientists who will be proceeding with the task as from today.

As pointed out by Mr. Kirpal, it is the first time in its 20 years of existence that Unesco has decided to honour a statesman of one of its Member States. I would not be betraying the spirit of this resolution if I said that the purpose was to honour both the "Man"—who also happened to be a great statesman—as well as the spirit of international understanding which he symbolized. This Round Table organized within the framework of the *Major Project for Mutual Appreciation of Eastern and Western Cultural Values* is also the last activity of this great project which was started exactly ten years ago when the 9th session of the Unesco General Conference met in New Delhi in 1956.

It also happens, Mr. President, that this Round Table is taking place when the Organization is preparing to celebrate its 20th anniversary. It is intended to carry out this celebration by reflecting on the manner and the extent to which Unesco has carried out some of the fundamental aims which were assigned to it by its founders, the most basic aim as embodied in its Constitution being:

*Since wars begin in the minds of Men, it is in the minds of Men that the defences of peace must be constructed.*

Referring to this basic principle, Jawaharlal Nehru, during his last visit to Unesco, in a speech he made four years ago, on 21 September 1962, stated:

*Unesco has set the right ideal before it to try to turn the minds of men and the way it is trying to do so is not the direct method of facing our many problems and conflicts but the indirect way of creating appreciation and understanding of art and culture. Presumably, this is a surer method of dealing with these problems than the direct political method, though of course both methods have to be tried. In any event, it is of the utmost importance that the purposes and objectives of Unesco should be remembered and we should always also remember that wars and conflicts begin in the minds of men and peace therefore has to be established there. In the measure that Unesco succeeds in the high endeavour will it help in the establishment of peace and rid humanity of the danger of war, and all the fears that encompass it.*

Unesco on its twentieth anniversary is trying to sum up the extent to which it has contributed to this ideal. We hope that through the participation of the eminent personalities that are assembled here to talk of Nehru as a thinker, as a man and as a statesman, this Round Table may contribute in helping towards this assessment. I would not like to anticipate, Mr. President, discussion of the theme "Jawaharlal Nehru's Ideal and the

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Action of Unesco," which I shall be presenting this afternoon. I would simply end by quoting a speech made by Mr. Rene Maheu, Director-General, when the Executive Board of Unesco in its meeting of 27 May 1964 paid tribute to the memory of Jawaharlal Nehru. I quote:

*Jawaharlal Nehru has radiated over the world like a beacon of tolerance and understanding among the peoples. This is because, all his life long, he never ceased to believe in the supremacy of the spirit in history and because never, not even while in prison and not even while holding power—which is also a prison in many respects—did he allow the call of human brotherhood and the demands of individual and national freedom to become separate spiritual aspirations. Others will speak of the great void he has left in the affairs of the world. We will lay stress on the unique place that he occupied in the hearts of men. Others will speak of his glory and his remarkable destiny as party leader and head of government. We will recall his tireless quest for truth and love. Others will calculate the effects of his death on the balance and future of the forces in his own country, in the vast expanse of Asia, and indeed in the whole world. We, for our part, wonder how, deprived of this guide and this example, we shall be able to choose and follow our path amid the raging confusion of this world in upheaval, now that the kindness of that smile, often so gay then suddenly so tired, the warmth of those brown eyes, the charm of that red rose, have disappeared from our view, now that the great light which shone in the East has gone out for ever—that light from whose radiance millions, nay tens and hundreds of millions, of us had become accustomed to nurture and rekindle the purest flame of our human conscience.*

# Nehru: Man of Two Cultures and One World

by

VALERIAN GRACIAS

Without any fear of exaggeration or contradiction it could be asserted that not many statesmen, politicians and 'revolutionaries', in the best sense of the word, have been at the same time exponents of a wide and universal culture, as Jawaharlal Nehru was. It is with much truth therefore that an appreciative writer has observed: "There are many strands in the temperament, character and intellectual calibre of Nehru derived from India and Europe, which make his personality rather more like a rich tapestry than like the homespun fabric." Distinctions are always invidious; but truth must ever prevail.

To effect through conscious processes a happy and a fruitful blend between all that was best in his Western upbringing and a wide knowledge of world affairs on the one hand and his deep-rooted loyalty to the traditions of India and love of her ancient culture on the other; to allow these double influences to shape and colour his dealings with men and matters at home and abroad; to explore possibilities and devise solutions in the best interests of national and world unity—is indeed a fruitful process and a remarkable achievement which will ever stand to his credit. And the sources from which all this can be substantiated are primarily not so much the voluminous writings of others as his thinking reflected in his own books, public utterances and private interviews.

## *Artisan of modern Indian culture*

I may be forgiven, I hope, if I seek to present my theme in the light of what the Second Vatican Council, which after four years of sessions concluded in Rome in 1965, has said about culture in its masterly and moving Document on the "Church in the Modern World." I think Mr. Nehru himself would have liked it. In spite of his rather strong views on the subject of organized religion, he had a very high regard for the role of the Vatican as a mighty cultural and moral force, abundantly testified by the speed with which he established diplomatic relations with the Holy See after India had attained independence, and by his official visit to Pope Pius XII.

It seems to me that the Vatican Council had just such a man as Nehru in mind when in its Constitution on the "Church in the Modern World," running into 23,335 words, it said that "in every group or nation there is an ever-increasing number of men and women who are conscious that they themselves are the artisans and the authors of the culture of their commu-

nity." Few will deny that Nehru was one of the greatest of such men as far as modern Indian culture is concerned. As Abdul Karim Kassim wrote of him: "The influence of Nehru on Indian renaissance cannot be measured in terms of day-to-day achievements. The whole future of India seems to be in process of being formulated by Nehru." Nehru was the embodiment of resurgent India.

Nehru appreciated, perhaps as few modern Indians could, the greatness and "the splendour that was Ind"—her ancient wisdom and philosophy, the treasures of her art, her music, her dancing—on which he has written in an almost lyrical style. He was no iconoclast. He warned his people on the need of hastening slowly, even as deep roots cannot be pulled out without great harm. They must look to the future and work for it purposefully and with faith and vigour, but at the same time they must keep their past inheritance and derive sustenance from it. To deny the past and break with it completely would be to uproot themselves and, sapless, dry up. Change is essential but continuity is also necessary. For life is like a relay race, in which one runner hands on the torch to another so that the race neither slows down nor pauses.

#### *Harmonious fusion*

Yet he realized that the future greatness of India lay in a harmonious fusion with all that was best in the modern civilization introduced by the West to India. Already in 1935 he wrote in his *Autobiography*: "I must say that those Hindus and Muslims who are always looking backwards, always clutching at things which are slipping away from their grasp are a singularly pathetic sight....The real struggle today in India is not between Hindu culture and Muslim culture but between these two and the conquering scientific culture of modern civilization." And in this attitude he was often opposed to the views of the Father of the Nation. In a particularly touching chapter entitled, fittingly, "Desolation" in his *Autobiography*, Nehru stated boldly that there was no stopping the process of mechanization, "for not only is our national and cultural progress bound up with it, but also our freedom itself." One is reminded of these lines:

*For not through Eastern windows only  
When daylight comes, comes in the light;  
In front the sun climbs slow, how slowly  
But westward look—the land is bright.*

And incidentally may I observe that at a time when in the face of narrow provincialism and utilitarian currents of thought in our country, the claims of culture tend to suffer and tarnish the splendour of the legacy left us by Nehru, this Round Table has come none too early and will undoubtedly help to maintain Nehru in the fulness of his stature as a humanist and as a statesman.



*Of old and new*

It was his tremendous vision that began the great experiment in mass democracy in India, that conceived the mammoth five-year plans so that the old could blend with the new, and the new, in a way, could bolster up the old. "He does not spend much time," wrote Dr. Radhakrishnan, "in glorifying the past, but is always active meeting the challenge of the future." Nehru maintained that the old culture had lost its real content; that it would succumb to the new-come which brings science and food for the hungry millions and principles of co-operation and social service and the abolition of classes and distinctions. Thus will India put on new garments and conform both to present conditions and her old thought. Undoubtedly, these are high ideals and ideals in a land where life yet moves slowly take time to materialize. India is like an elephant; you cannot move it that fast. Consider the hundreds of millions of people of different languages and differing backgrounds. If India today had to be vastly different from what she is, one is tempted to say that Nehru should have been born a few centuries ago in a land of freedom. But the designs of Providence are vastly different from those of men and radically opposed to the process of a mechanical evolution, even as mind differs from matter.

*An open mind*

Nehru's was not a closed-in mind. From his *guru* he had learnt the lesson. To Tagore, Mahatma Gandhi had once said: "I do not want my home to be walled in on all sides and my windows to be stuffed. I want the cultures of all lands to be blown about my house as freely as possible. But I refuse to be blown off my feet by any of them. Mine is not the religion of the prison house. It has room for the least among God's creatures. But it is proof against insolent pride of race, religion and culture"—words boldly inscribed at the entrance of the studios of All India Radio, Bombay, obviously for the inspiration of artists and listeners.

The winds of the West were allowed to blow freely through the mind of Nehru; and he was not blown off his feet. Speaking to the Indian Council of Cultural Relations in April 1950, he could say: "There is, I suppose, no culture in the world which is absolutely pristine, pure and unaffected by any other culture. It simply cannot be, just as nobody can say that he belongs 100 per cent to a particular racial type, because in the course of hundreds and thousands of years unmistakable changes and mixtures have occurred."

One could say then that, to a large extent, Nehru had answered the warning query made by the Vatican Council when it asked: "What must be done to prevent the increased exchange between cultures, which ought to lead to a true and fruitful dialogue between groups and nations, from disturbing the life of communities, destroying ancestral wisdom or jeopardizing the uniqueness of each people? How can the vitality and growth

of a new culture be fostered without the loss of living fidelity to the heritage of traditions?

*Language question and non-alignment*

The openness of Nehru's mind can be seen also in his approach to the language question in India. Though Nehru rejected the notion that English could become the lingua franca of India, yet he insisted that "English is bound to remain our chief link with the outside world"—the only window on the world of science and culture. It is in this context also that we must view Nehru's efforts at bridging the gap between the power blocs of the world. "Little by little," the Vatican Council said, "a more universal form of culture is developing, one which will promote and express the unity of the human race to the degree that it preserves the particular features of the different cultures." Nehru's non-alignment policy, on which barrels of ink have been poured, mixed at times with vitriolic acid, was not a piece of political statesmanship or opportunism, but an offshoot of a broad culture inasmuch as he desired to be friendly with all and inimical towards none. It was, for him, India's great contribution to an attempt at stabilizing international relations. Several years of imprisonment by the British had, says Lord Attlee, not soured or embittered Nehru; he did not rashly smash to pieces the machinery of government built up over many decades. Churchill's greeting to Nehru returning to London after his first visit to the U.S.A. was: "I would have liked to be with you and introduced you to American audiences. Do you know how I would have introduced you? I would have said, 'Here is a man who has overcome fear and hatred.' " And did not Gandhi say of his political heir: "He is pure as crystal, he is truthful beyond suspicion. He is a knight *sans peur et sans reproche*—he has the prudence of a statesman?"

*One cultural unit*

Verily, Nehru interpreted well the urges and aspirations of the peoples of Asia and Africa, but he interpreted vice versa to them the dreams and aspirations of other peoples in the rest of the world. Nehru was convinced that the day of national cultures was rapidly passing and the world was becoming one cultural unit. Therefore it was said of him that his political and other activities revealed the fact that he was moved by a profound sense of responsibility to the world at large.

Nehru has often been criticized for his lack of realism or for his exaggerated idealism, lack of worldly wisdom and of political acumen. He has been made at times the subject of contradictory criticisms. But as G.K. Chesterton has shown in his book, *The Everlasting Man*, often enough in such cases it is the critics who are proved to be abnormal, and the subject of criticism emerges as perfectly normal. This is not to imply that Nehru was beyond making any mistakes; to err is human. There are only two

types of people who do not err: God Almighty and the man who does nothing. The only trouble with Nehru was that far too easily he believed in the goodness of humanity, when all the world knows that in politics goodness has to be taken not for granted but proved. For goodness, if it is to be a workable basis of healthy relations, has to be a two-way traffic.

*Ideal link between East and West*

In conclusion, if I were asked to summarize all that I have said on the subject and present it in the form of an eulogy, I would offer it in the very words, multiplied a hundredfold, of Nehru in his commemorative speech of 1949 on Sarojini Naidu.

*The House knows that she stood more than any single human being in India for the unity of India in all its phases, for the unity of its cultural content, the unity of its geographical areas. It was a passion with her. It was the very texture of her life. It is well to remember, when we sometimes fall into narrower grooves, that greatness has never come from the narrowness of mind, or again, greatness for a nation as for an individual comes from wide vision, a wide perspective, an inclusive outlook and a human approach to life. So she became an interpreter in India of the many great things that the West has produced and she became an interpreter in other parts of India of India's rich culture. She became their ideal ambassador and the ideal link between the East and the West and between various parts and groups in India.*

Was he unconsciously projecting his own image in that tribute? The query does not need an answer.



and art could substitute the ancient religions and metaphysical constructions. Contrary to the anthropologists and historians who postulate the multiplicity of cultures, Nehru affirmed the unity of thought and the universality of science, art and technology. In this universality he saw the answer to the antagonism of the historical worlds, whether in the international sphere or in the internal realm of each society.

*Man and his contradictions*

However, Nehru's faith in science and technology was not absolute. Nothing was more distant from his thought than this easy optimism—very frequently obtuse—of the fanatics of progress. He knew that contradiction is not an accident but a law: the very substance of history and man himself. We solve our contradictions only to create others. In a lecture given in 1959 in the Azad Memorial series he warns us of the dangers of the modern age with great clarity:

*The Welfare State is a worthwhile ideal, but it may well be rather drab, and the examples of states which have achieved that objective bring out new problems and difficulties, which are not solved by material advance alone or by a mechanical civilization. Religion has played an important part in supplying some essential needs of human nature. But that type of religion has weakened its hold and is unable to meet the onslaught of science and rationalism. Whether religion is necessary or not, a certain faith in a worthwhile ideal is essential to give substance to our lives and to hold us together. We have to have a sense of purpose beyond the material and physical demands of our daily lives. Socialism and Communism attempt to give this sense of purpose, but they have tended to develop dogmas of their own. Communists have become the metaphysicians of the present age.*

In the same speech, the poet and artist that Nehru always was rebels against the sterility and spiritual poverty of the affluent society:

*A life divorced from Nature, and more and more dependent upon mechanical devices, begins to lose its savour and even the sense of function leaves it. Moral and spiritual disciplines break up, and some kind of disillusion follows with a feeling that something is wrong with our civilization. Some people talk of going back to Nature and to the simpler life of the ancient days. But whatever virtue there is in this, there can obviously be no going back, for the world has changed. An individual may take to sanyasa with its renunciation of life, but society as a whole cannot do so. It has to base itself on an acceptance of life with all its problems and difficulties and try to make the most of it. If it did not do so, it would perish.*

But if Nehru deems as possible a return to the past, he also knows that

the industrial society threatens us with mutilations no less serious and painful than those of slavery and feudalism: "The value of human personality diminishes in a mechanical society. The individual loses himself in the mass and tends to become merely an instrument in a complex setup which is constantly aiming at social and economic improvements of the group as a whole."

In contrast to the majority of the political leaders of this century, Nehru did not believe that he held the keys of history in his hands. Because of this, he did not stain his country nor the world with blood. For the same reason, he neither offers us prefabricated solutions to the conflicts between industry and poetry, science and spiritual needs, technology and private life. He thought that modern society could find an answer to these antagonisms by itself. The alternative was spiritual and physical death. He saw in the history of India an example of what this answer could be. (I say an example and not a model. The past was, for him, a stimulus and not something that we could repeat). In the Mauryan age, Indian civilization attained a synthesis between the Greek and the Persian cosmopolitan influences and its own tradition. A similar attempt—but partially aborted—had also been made by the Moghul Empire, especially under Akbar. At the end of his life Nehru asked himself:

*Can we combine the progress of science and technology with this progress of the mind and spirit also? We cannot be untrue to science, because that represents the basic fact of life today. Still less can we be untrue to those essential principles for which India has stood in the past throughout the ages. Let us then pursue our path to industrial progress with all our strength and vigour and, at the same time, remember that material riches without toleration and compassion and wisdom may well turn to dust and ashes.*

It is remarkable that Nehru, in spite of his mainly being a political figure, did not fall into the temptation of suppressing the contradictions of history by brute force or with a verbal *tour de passe*. He does not offer solutions; he shows us the way to find them. I emphasize this trait of his thought and character because it is unique in our world of fanatical Manicheans and hangmen masked as philosophers of history. He did not pretend to embody either the supreme good or the absolute truth but human liberty: man and his contradictions.

#### *Duality preserved*

There is a revealing passage in his memoirs. While relating his first experiences as an orator and agitator, he says: "I took to the crowd and the crowd took to me, and yet I never lost myself in it; always I felt apart from it." There is neither pride nor humility in this declaration; there is an awareness of being a man like the rest of them and, simultaneously, a distinct one. The same apparent paradox is observed in other traits of his

types of people who do not err: God Almighty and the man who does nothing. The only trouble with Nehru was that far too easily he believed in the goodness of humanity, when all the world knows that in politics goodness has to be taken not for granted but proved. For goodness, if it is to be a workable basis of healthy relations, has to be a two-way traffic.

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# Nehru: Man of Two Cultures and One World

by

OCTAVIO PAZ

I shall endeavour to be brief and say in a few words what I think of Nehru as a "Man of two cultures and one world." In the first place, I observe that the sentence can be reversed; it can also be said, with no less exactitude, that Nehru was a man of two worlds and one culture. In fact, I think that for him East and West were not two cultures but two historic worlds distinct from each other. He never opposed the *Upanishad* to the pre-Socratic philosophers, the *Gita* to the Gospels nor the logic of Nagarjuna to the dialectics of Marx. He always thought that, in the sphere of culture, dialogue and contradiction were not only necessary but also vital. Thought lives on criticism, that is to say, on the contradictions that it breeds either in others or in our own selves. For Nehru, the real opposition was not between oriental and western civilizations, between Vedantic non-duality and Christian scholasticism, between Ajanta and the frescoes of Masaccio etc., but between different social structures and institutions: caste and open society, state and the individual, imperialist and subjected countries, and so on. He saw the opposition between East and West as the clash between two historical realities. European expansion brought East and West face to face; imperialism united these two worlds but at the same time made them antagonistic: the West was the world of the masters and the East that of the dominated.

Nehru saw in the struggle for India's independence a part of this universal antagonism which also embraced the peoples of Asia as well as other continents. Still in his youth, perhaps since he took part in the Bruxelles Congress of the League of the Oppressed People, he passed from nationalism to internationalism. Against what is generally thought, internationalism is the only justification of nationalism: a nationalism which pretends to be universal always ends as imperialism; an open nationalism conceives itself as part of an enterprise common to all men. In short, for Nehru, the clash between different cultures was rather fictitious; the real thing was the historical opposition, the conflict between states and ideologies (those by-products of culture), the struggle of the poor against the rich and of the slaves against their oppressors. But his vision was not the one popularized and vulgarized by the propagandists and simplifiers of Marxism. He thought that these antagonisms could disappear one day by the action of technology. Once he said: "The essential and most revolutionary factor in modern life is not a particular ideology, but technological advance." If the outdated social structures were destroyed, science



and art could substitute the ancient religious and metaphysical constructions. Contrary to the anthropologists and historians who postulate the multiplicity of cultures, Nehru affirmed the unity of thought and the universality of science, art and technology. In this universality he saw the answer to the antagonism of the historical worlds, whether in the international sphere or in the internal realm of each society.

### *Man and his contradictions*

However, Nehru's faith in science and technology was not absolute. Nothing was more distant from his thought than this easy optimism—very frequently obtuse—of the fanatics of progress. He knew that contradiction is not an accident but a law: the very substance of history and man himself. We solve our contradictions only to create others. In a lecture given in 1959 in the Azad Memorial series he warns us of the dangers of the modern age with great clarity:

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*Can we combine the progress of science and technology with this progress of the mind and spirit also? We cannot be untrue to science, because that represents the basic fact of life today. Still less can we be untrue to those essential principles for which India has stood in the past throughout the ages. Let us then pursue our path to industrial progress with all our strength and vigour and, at the same time, remember that material riches without toleration and compassion and wisdom may well turn to dust and ashes.*

It is remarkable that Nehru, in spite of his mainly being a political figure, did not fall into the temptation of suppressing the contradictions of history by brute force or with a verbal *tour de passe*. He does not offer solutions; he shows us the way to find them. I emphasize this trait of his thought and character because it is unique in our world of fanatical Manicheans and hangmen masked as philosophers of history. He did not pretend to embody either the supreme good or the absolute truth but human liberty: man and his contradictions.

#### *Quality preserved*

There is a revealing passage in his memoirs. While relating his first experiences as an orator and agitator, he says: "I took to the crowd and the crowd took to me, and yet I never lost myself in it; always I felt apart from it." There is neither pride nor humility in this declaration; there is an awareness of being a man like the rest of them and, simultaneously, a distinct one. The same apparent paradox is observed in other traits of his

character and in episodes of his life. His ancestors had frequented the Moghul court and had absorbed Persian and Arabic heritage. Then, from his family tradition, he had a vein of heterodoxy vis-a-vis Hindu traditionalism. In the intellectual realm, he belongs to the great family of Indians who have made European culture their own. But, in contrast to Ram Mohan Roy—to mention only one of them—he drew inspiration from the rebellious and heterodox thought of the West. His relations with Europe were critical and this criticism was based on the heterodox tradition of the West itself. By heritage, education and own choice, Nehru belonged to a double “anti-tradition.” But, nevertheless, all his life he worked by the side of Gandhi, a man who embodied two traditions: the Hindu and the Christian. Aristocrat and man of the people; solitary in the crowd and surrounded by it in the solitude of his study; poet enamoured with science; democrat and socialist; nationalist and internationalist—Nehru’s life was a series of affirmations but his thought a renewed question about himself and India. He was faithful to his contradictions and for this very reason he neither killed others nor mutilated himself. We all know that in order to suppress our contradictors we must begin to suppress the internal contradictor we carry within. All men are two men. The dictators and the puritans, the judges and the inquisitors are all mutilated men who before exterminating others have killed half of themselves. Now that we live in what is called the “sunset of ideologies,” we realize that we do not require theologians in power. Nehru preserved his duality intact. He never dried the source of life, which is contradictory by its very nature; it incessantly denies itself in its affirmations and affirms itself in its denials. In this resides, for me, the originality and greatness of Nehru.

# Nehru: Man of Two Cultures and One World

by

OMAR ABOU-RICHEH

It is said that Jawaharlal Nehru's education and upbringing was all a product of the West and that India was there very much in his being; that the Nehru miracle consists in this, that in his person East and West, rather than meet in conflict, had come to an understanding to coexist and cooperate peacefully; that the two cultures, if there is such a thing as two cultures, had come to abide ever so happily in the friendly 'one world' that was Nehru's; and that Nehru was trying to fashion the outer world also after his own integrated conception.

What was the nature of this 'friendly one world' of Nehru's? And how, during his explorations, had he come by the vision of it? The world is interlinked. We are all members, one of another. Our varied traditions of literature and art, our faiths, our ways of living, all but add to the beauty and richness of Man's culture; the least among these being by no means insignificant. An occasion of pain anywhere in the world brings out the very best in Man—his humane touch, his one human culture—into action. There is only One Culture. There is only One World, and there is Man—Man, the Creator. Culture or Art—his creation. And Life—driven always to initiate and adjust itself to the thrills of Man's creative venture.

And there was Man. But where was he? Could it be in the West: where living Greece had come to find a second home; where the brave new idea of welfare state was taking shape; where liberal humanism of the 19th century was yearning to replace early socialism and Marxism of the twentieth; where Keynes was already trading his novel solutions for the economic ills of the society—where, in short, Reason and Science were fast coming of age?

The need of the hour was increasingly felt as being something more than Shaw's lively wit. A few men of reason had come sincerely to believe that a little dose of their essence, some reasoned teaching, could regenerate Man, could recast him into something better—a more reasonable, more sensible, an entirely different being. H.G. Wells had already brought out his modern Utopia; and he was working on Mankind in the Making. And there was a world war in the offing, and Wells had that rare instinct to be able to sense it in the air; but, then, he was viewing it as 'a war to end war'—as man's last folly, to recur never more! He had dismissed it as just a remor, not worth serious concern. Indeed he went on talking—with the same inspiration, undisturbed—about this theme of peace, a World State, and their possibilities.

But the great minds of the West, which Nehru had come to explore, seemed to be divided. For, there were thinkers like Huxley who in their series of *Brave New Worlds* had come across clear foreshadows of a nightmare, and not of a pleasant vision or dream. One thing, evidently, Wells had ignored—that the more primitive element in man's nature, the hysterical passion of nations, which, not infrequently, getting the better of the little reason man had come to acquire, does come to turn a lively democracy into a spiritless docility, even impel a great nation to abject surrender. Parallel to the Wellsian few's 'good sense', these Huxleyan few had the 'power' to smash unpredictably a whole Dream Structure to smithereens, to dust.

This self-confounding thinking, to Nehru, appeared to reduce all life in the West to a hopeless impracticability. It is in this practice of double standards that the true reason for the tragedy of many an Emerson and a Dewey, of a Woodrow Wilson, a Tolstoy—producing little effect even in their lands—ought to be sought. And, then, had come the disenchantment and, with it, the sad realization in Wells, growing wiser too late, that Man's Mind had come to the end of its tether. Man was losing his moorings, his home, in the West which—with all its professions of democracy and equality—had turned deaf towards India's primary aspirations for a *Swadeshi* economy, for national education, and towards Bengal's pain and reaction at Curzon's proposals for partition.

Russell, for one, among the West's leading philosophers—alone among them keeping pace with the events developing, and refusing to lose his head—still persisted in going about persuading people to look at things with a calm, detached mind. It would be folly to have to give in to Wells's spiritual vacuum, he seemed to be preaching. It was an insult to man's reason and dignity.

And it had come to be, also, a tether-end for Nehru's explorations. With all his admiration for the intellectuals of the West he had met, heard, read—surely something must be wrong with the West, Nehru was compelled to think, something missing somewhere that was letting it not be at peace with itself when faced with fresh problems of world and life. What the West gave Nehru could not have been culture—for culture, by nature, is something sympathetic, human, and one and universal. In Nehru's case it was an acquired thing at best. On the eve of his homecoming, he was left with a feeling that something there was that was disturbing his inner being, his subconscious—the Man in him.

Nehru returned to India a disturbed, sad man, badly shaken inside. The exploration or at least its first leg, after a good seven precious years of life, had ended in a failure; but the exploring must continue—and go deeper. The strange impact of the West had produced in him a stir, a first stir, and no more: a stir in his subconscious. The experience induced in him a mood of meditation, and a whole panorama of history started unfolding itself before his dreaming eye.

Those first strains flowing from the world's first known epic poem, the *Rigveda*, which sang of the world as the one common nest, of man only as

a citizen of the world, of man's wealth only as a wealth of nation, of earth only as the one common roost and cupboard, the unison steadily growing into a 'national anthem' in Invocation to Mother Earth and not to Mother India. And there, in that haven of Freedom, using Tagore's expression, a daughter of Earth herself was roaming from hill to hill, from bower to bower, her way not yet crossed by One whom the world was later to know and name as Fear!

This poetic touch of the *Rigveda*, all its own, continues in even what follows—as Man's very first attempt at marshalling a whole 'variety of religious experiences' gone by into a simple system of philosophy or theory of Evolution—in the *Samkhya*. Its very analysis and approach make it a rare thing of beauty—something more than a philosophy; by its turning, at points, into a Fairy Tale and an Ode to Loneliness, indistinguishably!

"In the Beginning," it says, "Man was alone, alone *with* Nature." So, the Creation story, according to Kapila, had started very much as a Man-and-Nature affair, and an affair in loneliness! "They fell in love. There were occasions they would fall out, too. Those early conflicts, between them, were to be punctuated, naturally, by brief interregna—of coexistence and of continued tension—when each would be doing nothing save set up Fear as a double Wall in between! But the senselessness of all this—this compulsion to waste their 'common' resources and energy on thoughtless preparedness—then dawned on both simultaneously, in a flash, and forthwith made them partners for life, for co-operation, for co-efficiency, giving them a new sense—the sense of sacrifice, of Man's instinctive concern for 'the other.' And they began to live happily ever after..."

Man can find fulfilment only by evolving himself, outgrowing himself completely: his Ego, his selfishness, his petty little vanities. That alone would leave the world a very significant bit different from what he had found it in the beginning. Peace, or joy, always comes from this making of one's life an evolving, continual self-effacement towards an ever-growing loneliness.

This was known to many a great man of Indian history. It was known, for instance, to Asoka—Asoka who, from one single experience in his life, had come to his senses to regard all wars, all violence, as the worst folly man could ever commit and, from that moment onwards, had taken to practising his bit of restraint and charity for Peace at home (Kalinga), at the frontiers, and across them by making friends with Ptolemy and with Antiochus. A King's bit of self-effacement this: for leaving the world a bit different after him! His daily life beginning and ending with this Vedic prayer in action:

*Hereby I resolve to be friendly towards all;  
May all Creation turn friendly towards me;  
Come one, come all, let us all friendly be.*

This was known to Tagore who sang in his *Gitanjali*:

*Where the mind is without fear,  
Where the world has not been broken up  
Into narrow domestic walls...*

And this was known to Gandhi when he told the Poet:

*I want  
the cultures of all Lands  
to blow about my house, as freely as possible.  
But I refuse  
to be blown off my feet, by any one of them.*

And this was also known to many another Indian besides who was not so great and not so well known.

Only to Nehru had been given the privilege of expression and action. His life of action, ensuing from this dream journey in his subconscious, is but another link in the chain of India's developing destiny and role in the world; yet another Ode to Love whose essence is self-effacement and—its child—Loneliness. To Nehru had been given the privilege of expression. Just as Kapila in his *Samkhya* had formulated a consistent philosophy from those scattered experiences of a whole Age, Nehru's contribution to Indian history would have been enough had he but enunciated for world politics his principles of coexistence and co-operation from Asoka's single experience of self-conversion, and left.

But, also, to him had been given the privilege of action. At the beginning he was sure of only one thing: sure of what he would not be, would not do. That he was not going to practise Law. For a system that has no eye for sifting truth or for shedding a tear is worth little as a pursuit:

*Not his to stifle  
Justice with the ethereal aroma of mercy;  
Nor his to stab  
Mercy with the ruthless sword of justice.*

The twin in his person would abide, as his twin strength, for life.

Equipped with this peace of mind (his reward at the end of those brief but intense explorations in the subconscious), now he could go forward with some confidence. This was to be his little candle, this Peace, for showing him the path, and on the path would be those mute millions of the villages, India's uncomplaining vacant-eyed peasants, and among them a rugged, sturdy *jat*—a piece of earth more than a human being:

*The emptiness of the ages in his face  
And on his back the burden of the world.*

So, this was going to be his field of action, his field of work—India, her masses. His mission—their freedom. But he had not known how to act in a situation, yet; and the task before him so overwhelming!

*It was all eyes, when he came:  
 A nation's eyes—there starting across  
     her vacant centuries still;  
 A whole world's eyes—with a transferred  
     pain touched, filled;  
 And EYES, his own—abrim with Dreams  
     ... of yore ... unfulfilled!*

And there was—Gandhi! Gandhi, who (in the words of Einstein) “had conquered the brutality of the West with the simplicity of a human being,” provided him with the needed tools of the game. For, the task that the young Nehru was about to take on himself as a self-chosen responsibility and obligation was so overwhelming that it could not be taken up, even less accomplished, without some sheltering thought of love to bank upon—at least in a crisis.

Eventually, this is the new Nehru that plunges into action, to look back no more. That wonderful, most cherishing love of a father for his son; that spiritual, motherly love of Gandhi; and that indulgent, childlike love of the masses—a regular *Triveni* of love, his steps trebly assured, Nehru, a child of shyness, he, goes forth. Pettiness, being sly, questionable means—these Nature had not given him. The world's loneliest soul, he would fain part company, should matters come to that, but always “with malice towards none.” Whilst the fight was on, glory for him lay not in winning a battle so much as in seeing its grimness through. The only thing now left for him to share with his masses would be their poverty, their pains, their miseries.

It was in the nature of things again, in the nature of two personal evolutions—or, rather, of two stages in one integral Evolution—that Nehru and Gandhi should, on occasions, come to differ also. Gandhi in Free India could go without having to waste one single penny on national defence; Nehru's India could not. Gandhi would decide to suspend a historic movement at its peak—a step which would baffle a Nehru who, in no event, was going to be coaxed into seeing “the wisdom of that all.” Nehru and Congress had always regarded non-violence as but a policy, never as a creed. For Gandhi, on the other hand, non-violence was his very breath of life. Nehru had not evolved himself, yet, to the point where Gandhi had.

And then the parting of the ways had to come. Unconsciously, Gandhi was taking to the social emancipation of his country, and Nehru to its emancipation from economic ills. Its political freedom seemed to be worrying neither very much. Both seemed to have left it to the intangible world forces. History, at this stage of the struggle, appeared to be repeating itself once again; like Wells about 1914, now in 1936 it seems to have been Nehru's turn to smell something in the air: a World War coming—a gathering Revolution, as he would perceive it—and liberating all unfree nations of the world from the scourge of colonialism.



# Nehru : The Fight for National Independence and International Peace

*by*

ROMESH THAPAR

We are too close to the life and times of Jawaharlal Nehru, too involved in him who was a part of us, to arrive at any very definite or detailed conclusions about the man and his impact on our age. But we live in a historical period of profound economic and political transformations where many institutions are in flux, where a phenomenal growth of science and technology is changing the known contours of our accepted world. We must open many doors to understand how men like Nehru moved millions into action, moulded events, directed our thrust forward into the future. It is in this spirit—the spirit of our times—that I have approached Nehru's role in the fight for national independence and international peace.

## II

In India, from the early beginnings of modern political and social action, we have witnessed repeated attempts to unravel the Indian reality. It was part of the inner struggle of sensitive, enlightened men to find communion with their people from whom they were separated by an almost unbridgeable spiritual and physical gulf. The unchanging village societies of a sub-continent seemed to defy understanding. Ram Mohan Roy, Vivekananda, Bankim Chandra, Gokhale were among the giants who launched upon the building of a bridge, but the effort was largely incomplete. Failing to achieve an equation with the people, these outstanding men sought in comparative alienation the introspective world of personal salvation. Over the decades the gulf widened.

When the young Jawaharlal returned to his country, he was already in the throes of this inner struggle. A love of the country and its people was not enough. Nor was the nationalism fed by the British colonial presence. Indeed, circumstances almost pushed him into the civil service, and later into the lucrative legal profession of his father. This had been the fate of most of the elite. Nehru's search for the means with which to expel imperialism from our land should be seen in the context of his struggle to link with his people so as to be able to understand their hopes and fears and to lead them to their dreams. Like so many before him, this modern, rational, impatient man must have been aware that alone, as an individual, he would become irrelevant in the terrifying wasteness and complexity of India. Someone would have to help him 'belong'.

And that someone had arrived on the Indian scene, that rare prophet who at last possessed the key to the ethos of our people—Gandhiji. Nehru's almost immediate alliance with Gandhi was not accidental. Gandhi was lifting the freedom movement from the individual responses of the elite to the plane of mass action. He was also evolving the technique of non-violent, disciplined *satyagraha* which held out the hope that mass action would not end in chaos. Here was an intensely practical man, consciously applying his theories to the Indian reality, testing and re-testing them, determined to make the village his base. The bridge at last seemed complete. Significance entered Nehru's life.

### III

Too little attention is paid to the framework of Nehru's thinking within the contours of the Indian reality that Gandhi sketched for him—and for so many others whom he moulded into heroic dimensions. In the relationship between these two extraordinary men, at a critical moment in the history of the nation, do we find the key to comprehending not only the men but the dynamics which were to condition the struggle for freedom, sustaining the faith of the people in ultimate victory despite the odds.

Gandhi was only too aware that a prolonged and violent struggle for power could dismember India's frail unity, held together in a modern sense by the mechanics of colonial exploitation—a unity that never really existed in history. He set out not only to strengthen the unifying factors in Indian life, but also to evolve a form of struggle which would preserve unity. *Ahimsa*, *satyagraha* and *swadeshi* were the amalgam of Gandhi's 'magic', a magic born of a deep understanding of our people and of our basic characteristics. It dissolved fears of fratricidal strife, gave the people the courage to stand up and challenge imperialism without weapons, and held out the threat of economic sanctions against the foreign exploiter. And, in the process, a varied assortment of men and women, belonging to various communities, classes and culture patterns, found themselves part of a common image. They at last could become a nation.

The practical, perceptive Gandhi was deeply conscious that the momentum of the non-violent struggle could not be sustained in the manner of a fight to the finish. The battle for freedom, in order to succeed in unity and non-violence, would have to proceed through phases, compromises, advances and retreats, until the whole country was moving in unity—the vertical ascent could only proceed by elaborate horizontal adjustment. But a complex struggle of this kind could only be conducted successfully if the pressure of public opinion in the world could be brought to bear upon the conscience of democratic Britain. That Britain was sensitive to such pressure was important; for, a fascist state would have unleashed violent reactions and probably compelled a totally different response, changing the course of the unified struggle.

Shrewdly, over the years, Gandhi saw his ally in Nehru, the fighter for

international causes who viewed the future of his country as an integral part of the world community. Always, Jawaharlal was his mentor on the world. And he was Jawaharlal's when India was on the agenda. They interpreted history differently, but that did not matter. If the struggle for freedom within the country was dominated by the incredible power of Gandhi's will, it had the inspiring sweep of Nehru's international commitments abroad. Two amazingly contrary men fused, as it were, in the mind of India. A deep communion was established between Sabarmati Ashram and Anand Bhavan.

#### IV

The debates during the twenties, thirties and forties within the leading cadre of the Indian National Congress make very great sense when read and understood within this kind of framework. While Nehru with his modern, scientific, socialist thinking worked for the radicalization of the movement, he was at critical moments repeatedly persuaded to compromise with the realistic traditionalism of Gandhi. It had become apparent to both men that if the momentum and unity of the freedom struggle were to be preserved they would have to work together. One could not really do without the other. Inevitably, over the years, whether at home or abroad, Gandhi and Nehru were complementary to an understanding of the Indian reality.

The compromises gave the Indian National Congress its strangely amorphous character. Amorphousness was strength in the situation that prevailed over a sprawling and varied subcontinent with its many developed communities, castes and interests seeking a national personality. An assembly of the Indian people was what the Congress attempted to become—and in fact became. Impatience among his comrades was Gandhi's greatest fear. Compromises, he realized, intensified this impatience. The clash of developing and ramified interests, particularly those communal, made compromise—and patience—harder to sustain.

Nehru was impatient. How often he exploded in despair or in anger. With many millions on the move, and mass organizations straining at the leash, he could see the possibilities of a dramatic overthrow of British power. But Gandhi always expended great effort to control him, pacify him, warning him of the repercussions of hasty action on national cohesion and unity. A complex country had created within Nehru a dilemma which was to remain with him to the end.

Nehru's compromises with Gandhi's thought and action cut him off increasingly from his natural militant-nationalist, socialist and communist allies in the movement. One by one, they withdrew to pursue their own paths. Each was to be isolated by the skill of Gandhi, the inspirational work of Nehru and the hard organizing of the men who worked the machine of the movement that was quietly taking on in the forties the recognizable form of a party. Indeed it was becoming a party fearful of its own radical-

ism and encrusted with conservative responses. Nehru's impatience grew rapidly with the crystallization of Muslim separateness--and there seemed no reasonable solution for it so long as the British remained on the scene.

In those momentous days which saw the defeat of fascism and were to witness a transfer of power in India, Nehru must have wondered whether the patience of the Mahatma was the answer to India's unity--particularly when the armed forces began to stir under the impact of the naval strike in Bombay. The so-called Nehruites were impatient with Nehru. After all, significantly, the day after the start of the naval strike, a war-exhausted Britain announced the despatch of a Cabinet Mission to arrive at a final settlement of the Indian problem. Was this the time to talk or to fight? History is made in lonely decisions of this kind.

## V

There were two possibilities at that moment in history. To continue on the basis of Gandhi's well-tested methods of compromise and adjustment and proceed with infinite patience to a gradual erosion of imperial power. Or to adopt the more dramatic alternative, quickened as it was by the traumatic events of world history (the triumph over fascism and the inspiring victories of the peoples' struggles), and call for a revolutionary leap to a predetermined uprising and overthrow of alien rule. As we now see it, neither alternative worked. Caught within the constitutional web of the cleverest imperial power the world has known, and confronted basically by the main contradictions of Gandhi and Nehru in their purest abstract sense, the country was impelled towards partition, towards a tragic finale to the freedom struggle.

The compromise of partition was rooted essentially in impatience, impatience with the parochial and the bigoted who refused to work for unity, impatience with the patience of those who believed that only through prolonged and disciplined struggle could unity be preserved, impatience to expel the British from India, impatience to take charge of the country and get it moving. Gandhi was patient. He could not accept the vivisection of India. His dream of unity was defeated almost at the moment of triumph--or so he thought.

History might well conclude, when all the facts are known, that Gandhian patience could have compelled an exhausted Imperial Britain to hand over power to a united centre a few years later. Nehru, emotionally opposed to partition, must have played with the same thoughts, but the immediate compulsions were irresistible. A chain of events had been set in motion. The whole structure of imperial power was breaking up. Even the princes were dreaming--of power! There was a gnawing fear that delay would certainly spark uncontrollable extremism--communal, feudal and secular--which even an exhausted alien ruler could exploit for further vivisection of the subcontinent. The pointers were visible to all. Violence was in the air.

Freedom came. And with it, a divided and explosive heritage. Within months, came the biggest blow of all: the inevitable, inexplicable climax to partition. An assassin's bullet silenced the man who had been Nehru's living link with the India he so passionately loved. Many years earlier, writing about Gandhi, Nehru had unconsciously revealed the meaning to him of this link:

*He is an extraordinary paradox. I suppose all outstanding men are so to some extent. For years I have puzzled over this problem : why with all his love and solicitude for the underdog he yet supports a system which inevitably produces it and crushes it ; why with all his passion for non-violence he is in favour of a political and social structure which is wholly based on violence and coercion. Perhaps it is not correct to say that he is in favour of such a system ; he is more or less of a philosophical anarchist. But, as the ideal anarchist state is too far off still and cannot easily be conceived, he accepts the present order. It is not, I think, a question of means that he objects to as he does to the use of violence in bringing about a change. Quite apart from the methods to be adopted for changing the existing order, an ideal objective can be envisaged, something that is possible of achievement in the not distant future. Sometimes he calls himself a socialist, but he uses the word in a sense peculiar to himself which has little or nothing to do with the economic framework of society which usually goes by the name of socialism. Following his lead, a number of Congressmen have taken to the use of the word, meaning thereby a kind of muddled humanitarianism. I know Gandhiji is not ignorant of the subject, for he has read many books on economics and socialism and even Marxism, and has discussed it with others. But I am becoming more and more convinced that in vital matters the mind by itself does not carry us far.*

## VI

From his lonely summit of power, Jawaharlal Nehru was soon to sense his own perceptive power to analyse and dissect the tangled skein of the reality that had emerged in free India. In essence it was an inheritance from Gandhi, but he had woven into it his own sensitive rediscovery of his land and people. In the course of the freedom struggle and the tentative planning of free India's future, he had convinced himself that the political energy of a complex society in the throes of fundamental development is dependent on understanding the role of a host of contrary factors and how the three conditioners of change—the inert, the catalyst and the polarizer—are brought into some kind of creative partnership. The unity of India obsessed him, for India was poor, backward, obscurantist and could be chopped up into many pieces under external and internal pressures. He set out to elaborate for his countrymen the conceptual disciplines which would provide the frame for political-economic growth in unity.

Operating on a large time-scale, with a dedication which was to become legendary, Nehru tested and re-tested his ideas and finally reduced them to what he thought would be the ever-present conditioning influences. First, the very sensitive federal character of our state which dictates a responsive, continental balance of power between the various regions. Second, the powerful, persistent assertion of the regional elites and specialized interests that equal sharing of economic resources should be the basis of national development. And, third, the pressure to defend the people's aspirations, and, through secular safeguards, the essential interests of the many and sizable communities inhabiting the state, particularly those that exist continentally and help strengthen the bonds of federal unity. These influences were translated by him into the slogans of democracy, socialism and secularism and he repeatedly warned that we could only neglect them at our peril.

Democracy in our country, Nehru maintained, is not just a matter of exercising the vote in freedom and secrecy, or of electing governments every five years. Indian democracy must possess the special capacity to cushion, amend and mould regional demands in a way that they do not erode the unity and strength of the federal structure. It must also be capable of curbing regionalism, particularly when the interests of the more powerful (or the less powerful) take on arrogant, chauvinistic postures in linguistic, caste and communal agitations with their markedly economic-political dimensions. And all this sophisticated adjustment must be achieved in conditions where both politics and economics are underdeveloped.

Socialism in our conditions, Nehru emphasized, is not concerned only with the building up of the public sector of the economy to a commanding position and with the curbing of the profits and privileges of the more affluent in our developing society. Indian socialism demands that urgent attention be paid to the backward areas of the country. A limited economic cake has to be divided in a planned manner so that every region feels that it has a stake in the business of growth planning. This is not as easy as it sounds, for unrealistic regional demands can lead to uneconomic spending and a declining growth rate despite the mobilization effort put in. Many an economic posture will have to be dictated by the fusion or clash of regional interests. Political leadership cannot ignore these economic equations.

Secularism, Nehru underlined, is not designed only to assure the peace and security of the minorities or of the Muslims in particular. It demands that we renounce Hindu revivalism, that integration between the communities takes place through the processes of industrial and technological growth, that there be full recognition and respect for difference and non-conformity. In other words, any attempt artificially to create what is known as a single-nation state be discouraged—for, such an attempt would only undermine a growing federal unity.

Nehru was convinced that democracy, socialism and secularism, understood in the Indian context, placed a heavy responsibility on the central

power which must combine the functions of disciplining force, safety valve, consensus-maker and pace-setter. He was equally convinced that any weakening of the central power on these crucial concepts of our federal polity would generate the kind of tensions which disrupt the smooth functioning of the state. This conviction motivated Nehru to make a conscious and continuing effort at regional and central level to structure Indian unity within the dynamics of the maximum possible national consensus. A total confrontation between Right and Left was sought to be blunted.

It could be argued that this approach emerged from a very special appreciation of reality by Nehru. Here perhaps we might eventually seek his permanent relevance in history. It makes him in a way more of a moral philosopher than a pragmatic innovator in political strategy. His deep commitment to Gandhi's Indianness rules out violence categorically as a means. To him, the poet and the philosopher, life in all its manifestation takes on a profound spiritual meaning, even an idyllic, almost romantic, mysterious significance. He had seen the dogmas fail. Yet the terrible poverty of his people would not allow him personal salvation. He therefore conceived of institutional change with a conscious acceptance of delay. Change was no longer to be measured by speed alone. Only that change was worthwhile which would change man. The objectives of a socialist society had to be measured by the exercise of individual morality. That this poetic, audacious, almost romantic concept of transformation was to be attempted by the world's poorest people was ironic. Therefore, this thinking needed translation into strategy.

As it evolved, this Nehruist strategy—in many respects similar to the theorizing on a single party system in other parts of Asia and Africa but without the rigidity of encirclement that an authoritarian form imposes—fortified the original character of the Indian National Congress (that is, an amorphous assembly of varied opinions) and prepared it for the challenges born out of freedom. Even opposition parties, including those with an apparently revolutionary intention, began in one way or another to subscribe to the politics of consensus. The job of the ruling leadership was to forge a relevant, forward-looking maximum consensus. The job of the radical opposition outside was to prevent the forging of a minimum consensus which could be dictated by the entrenched, conservative elements of the ruling party. Political battles assumed the form of family quarrels, a breakdown or erosion of the national consensus only taking place when a particular plateau of development was reached and vested interests stood in the way of forward movement or ascent to the next plateau; in other words, a readjustment of the horizontal components for a new consensus. It was a remarkable achievement, expressing itself fully in the optimistic fifties, an achievement comparable to the 'magic' of Gandhi's *ahimsa*, *satyagraha* and *swadeshi*. It raised a whole nation to its feet and gave it the confidence to move towards a modern world after centuries of slumber. It identified Nehru totally with the people.

## VII

The national consensus was projected internationally, too. Non-alignment, as enunciated by Nehru and backed fully by his people, gradually came to be accepted as an immensely powerful weapon for the emerging independent nations of Asia and Africa. Indeed, it was regarded as the yardstick of a new nation's independence in international affairs. Nehru did not evolve his attitudes through 'hunches'. He applied his mind to the harsh realities of a cold war situation and thrashed out an approach that would serve the national interest of India which he saw as closely interlocked with the fate of embattled Asia and Africa.

When India gathered her strength in freedom, the world was apprehensive, uncertain of the future. A terrible war had ended. Another was threatened by the 'arrival' of the nuclear age. Nehru, nourished on the humanistic, liberal thought of the West and the egalitarian, anti-imperialist ideology of the socialist/communist movement, saw a world divided dangerously into two blocs. He realized that commitment either way would sharpen the existing polarization, increase the chances of war and gravely damage the possibility of the developed world aiding the underdeveloped which constituted two-thirds of mankind. He had to move cautiously, for neutralism was suspect in a sharply divided world and, if amateurishly enunciated, could isolate India.

Starting with an assessment of the geographical position of India and her size, Nehru concluded that she could not be ignored for long by either of the power blocs, that we would have a common frontier with the communist world, that a democratic society would always have to embody the elements of a mixed economy—whether of private and public sector or public and co-operative sector—rooted in a socialist base, and that India's many communities and culture patterns, some advanced and some backward, would necessitate a system of balanced economic planning. He could then turn on his unthinking critics and ask them what policy other than a neutral or non-aligned one truly reflected the national interest. The internal compulsions dictated the external posture. The external posture assisted the transformation of internal realities in the direction of a planned polity which would seek a democratic, secular and socialist structure.

But there was something more to it. This policy did not interpret national self-interest as transitory opportunism. It was again an expression of Nehru's extremely moral central position—that man must resolve his problems in tolerance, without violence, in a kind of consensus, and above all his action must be illumined by possibilities for the future of man. On the sensitive peripheries of the cold war confrontation, this faith was put under heavy strain but it did in a way condition Nehru's position. Tibet was a vacuum which had to be filled—and China had the greater right to fill it. If there was bloodshed in Hungary, and the suppression of a popular revolt, attitudes were to be fashioned not in simple principles but in the need for the time being to stabilize the confrontation between the blocs.



He believed firmly that normality returns to revolutions, and always viewed the angry outbursts of neighbouring China in this context. If he was compelled to adopt postures towards the latter part of his life that were dictated largely by national self-interest, it was only a short-term necessity. He seldom lost sight of the perspectives he had sketched. This approach lifted the concept of non-alignment to a positive philosophy for many countries of the world and provided an opportunity to stabilize the confrontation of the superpowers. It was in perfect accord with the ethos of his people who did not see things in black or white, but in shades of grey.

The main strategic aim of the non-aligned nations, brought together by the persuasive faith of Nehru, was therefore to arrange a *detente* between the block leaders. The collective power of the non-aligned was brought into play at various levels, including the United Nations. The grim logic of the nuclear age, and the wider recognition of the consequences of a nuclear clash, gave voice to the demand for a *detente* between the blocs. It isolated, and at the same time excited, the sectarians in both blocs to oppose this trend for peace as a betrayal of principles. Nehru was to invite the wrath of the sectarians of the world, but, undaunted, almost Gandhian in resolve, he pursued his objective of peace among men.

### VIII

In dream begins responsibility. Fulfilment awaits another day. If Mahatma Gandhi's vision of a united India was darkened in 1947 by the partition of the subcontinent, Jawaharlal Nehru's determination to lift his land and people into the twentieth century was blunted in 1962 by a developing military confrontation along India's sprawling frontier which brought into sharp focus the weaknesses, the gaps, and the shortfalls in economic and political effort during the years of freedom. The spirit of India sagged, despite the massive achievements of these years.

We are too close to these events to take even the beginning of an objective historical view. Questions crowd the mind. Did Nehru's obsession with the formulation of a unifying consensus create dependence on a continuum which, among other things, dictated that a colonial-type apparatus of administration perform complex tasks for which it was unsuited? If the consensus on policy forged by Nehru embodied the broad support of almost every political party in the country, what prevented a fuller involvement and commitment of his natural allies outside the Congress party? Was it the tendency in the ruling party to exclusivism in the exercise of power which drove away the talent that alone could operate the impressive superstructure for the speedy democratic socialist transformation of India? Or had the world's experience of the aberrations of political organization made Nehru inhibited, fearful of becoming a captive of supposedly dedicated party cadres who were urgently needed as executors of policy? Or did growth of a mixed economy create other powerful vested interests capable of opposing a revolutionary breakthrough? Had the economic

and political pulls of the twentieth century made it imperative to design a sharper weapon of transformation and renewal than the consensus of a Gandhi or a Nehru? The answers to these questions cannot undermine the unique contribution of Jawaharlal Nehru to his country's entry into the twentieth century, but they will inevitably determine national attitudes in the years to come.

By 1962, the threat to the frontiers of India eroded the internal consensus; defence had become a crippling burden and was polarizing political and economic attitudes. Externally, the patient work for world peace done on the basis of non-alignment was fractured. Confusion and discord set in to take their toll. But, undaunted to the very end, Jawaharlal Nehru searched for answers to the questioning in the mind of India. It is even possible to speculate that he was reaching out for a deeper exploration of his concepts, crossing the boundaries of India towards a greater continental balance and unity. When we think of him, we shall always remember him as one who never ceased to search for the pathways to India's unity, to India's upliftment from centuries of poverty, to India's spiritual renaissance in a world where sensitive man could live in peace and concord.

# Nehru: Social Justice and National Development

by

ASOKA MEHTA

Jawaharlal Nehru's contribution to the making of modern India is too versatile to be classified and categorized. And yet if he is to be associated with anything specific and central in India's transition into the modern times, it is with his contribution to the concept of social justice as the foundation of national development. The methodology of economic planning was, for him, the chief instrument of securing social justice.

The concept of social justice is not a postscript or a sequel to Indian nationalism. It has been an essential part of the Indian national movement for independence and woven into the texture of the Indian National Congress's ideology since the early 1930's. Nehru was however the principal force behind this fusion between the idea of political independence and that of social justice to be realized and made secure through comprehensive economic planning.

Many of us may still recall how the Congress at its Bombay session in May 1929 came to the conclusion that the great poverty and misery of the Indian people were due not only to foreign exploitation in India but also to the economic structure of society which the alien rulers supported so that their exploitation might continue. In this momentous resolution we expressed the view that it was necessary to make revolutionary changes in the economic and social structure of society in order to remove the poverty and misery of the Indian masses and gross inequalities of which they were victims. Many of us can still recall with emotion the debates at the Karachi Congress in March 1931, in the course of which we drew up the resolution on fundamental rights and the economic programme. Thanks to Nehru, we had the courage to say that when India became free the state should own and control key industries and services, mineral resources, railways, waterways, shipping and other means of public transport.

Then again in April 1936, at the Lucknow Congress, we came to the conclusion that the urgent problem of the country was the appalling poverty, unemployment and indebtedness of the peasantry which was fundamentally due to the antiquated and repressive land tenure and revenue systems. We expressed the view that the final solution of this problem required the removal of imperial exploitation, a radical change of the land tenure and revenue systems, and a recognition by the state of its duty to provide work for the unemployed masses of rural India.

In December 1938, Nehru, as Chairman of the National Planning Committee set up by the Congress, said that there could be no planning

if it did not include big industries. In the month of June in the same year, we find him writing the following memorandum to the Committee:

*The ideal of the Congress is the establishment of a free and democratic state in India. Such a democratic state involves an egalitarian society in which equal opportunities are provided for every member for self-expression and self-fulfilment, and an adequate, minimum, civilized standard of life is assured to each member so as to make the attainment of this equal opportunity a reality. This should be the background or foundation of our plan.*

Thus a revolutionary change of social and economic structure was to be brought about through state ownership and control of industry, industrialization in a big way, and reform of land tenure and revenue systems. These were the three broad strands in the economic thinking of the more radical sections of the Congress led by Nehru at the close of the thirties.

There is no doubt that, from a historical point of view, the sharp change in the economic idiom of the Congress since 1929 outlined above owes a good deal to the Soviet experiment as seen by Nehru. At the same time, he became somewhat apprehensive in the mid-thirties about the turn of events in Russia and doubts arose in his mind as to the methods employed there. The question of ends and means tortured his mind and the rise of Fascism in Italy, of Nazism in Germany and of the Falangist organization in Spain filled his sensitive soul with great forebodings. It was as a result of deep inquiry and self-search that he finally came to rest his faith in the ideal of a free and democratic state and an egalitarian society to which I have just referred.

We thus see that Nehru was ready with the methodology and ideology of India's transformation into a modern state when independence came in 1947. The adoption of the Constitution based on universal adult franchise in 1950 and the setting up of the Planning Commission later that year were the first essential steps in this direction. Having devised a machinery for democratic planning, which was the first of its kind to be adopted anywhere in the world, Nehru proceeded to give shape to the plans in the light of his own thinking.

It is possible to sum up the evolution of Nehru's thinking on social justice in a few broad ideas. Introducing the First Plan before the Lok Sabha in 1952, Nehru said that rapid industrialization, including the establishment of heavy industries, was as necessary in the interest of national development as it was to have a strong agricultural economy. Class differences had to be ended and economic equality had to be achieved; but these changes had to be brought through peaceful means, legislation and the growing pressure of the state. While the state should control strategic points in the economic scene, such as banking and insurance, by and large a controlled and mixed economy with a certain amount of regulation of the private sector would be enough to bring about the desired transformation.

His main contributions to the First Plan were in respect of community development and land reforms, both of which aimed at revolutionizing the basis of India's rural economy.

The Second Five Year Plan was built up in the context of the Avadi Congress resolution on the socialistic pattern of society? Nehru emphasized that planning was necessary for the private sector as much as for the public, and that the guiding principles of all social action should be over-all social gain rather than private profit. Introducing the Second Plan before the Lok Sabha in May 1956, Nehru said that the philosophy of our planning was to take advantage of every possible way of growth and not to do something that fitted in with some rigid theory. He was convinced that our laws were powerful enough to keep the private sector in check, if necessary. Hence he saw no immediate need for nationalization although there would be more and more national industries with the latest techniques of production. While the public sector was to be given a wide field, for him the socialistic pattern of society meant a society where there was social cohesion, a society without classes, a society where there was equality of opportunity and possibility for every one to lead a good life.

Nehru's contribution to the Third Plan was his decisive influence on its size which was double that of the Second Plan. He also pulled his weight in favour of the steel targets and the provision for power and in the emphasis on physical planning. At the same time, in a characteristic manner, he took great interest in the child welfare programmes. Thus over 12 years of Indian planning, we see Nehru contributing the following broad ideas: community development and land reforms, rapid industrialization and provision of social services and education and, above all, a methodology of social action based on considerations of social gain after the widest possible consultation of group interests and their acquiescence to a common policy achieved through democratic persuasion.

The final and the finished form of Nehru's views on social justice was essentially practical and pragmatic, ethical and social, altruistic and humanitarian. Starting out in life as a liberal, a democrat and an ardent nationalist, he came to believe in the power of scientific method and reasoning and was, at the same time, extremely sensitive to injustice and human misery and suffering. In the end, he came to conceive of a free, good and just society, a society of creative individuals to be realized gradually and peacefully. As long as one believes in an open society, in thoughtful social change through discussion and persuasion, it is difficult to see what better method could be used to transform India into a modern state. Even then, the type of democratic socialism in which Nehru came to believe was probably for him not an end in itself. It was but an essential phase in the process of revolutionizing the way of life of an entire people, of radically altering their attitudes to life and work and the world; in short, a phase in the process of effecting a new flowering of an old civilization. For him, secularism and peaceful international coexistence and co-operation were really necessary preconditions for the success of this process of trans-

formation. Throughout his life he had an abiding faith in the rationality and creativity of the Indian people and all he sought to do through economic planning was again to open up within them the springs of creative thought and action.

For Nehru secularism was not just separation of the church and the state, demarcation of the realms of God and Caesar. It meant equal acceptance of different religions, as so many mansions in the common House of Humanity. It is basic respect for rival religions that alone can make secularism a creative force. Every religious belief was being influenced by the pressure of a new culture of science and technology. However deep the inward thrust of a religion might be, it had become increasingly outward-looking. It is in that outward expression that community of understanding had to emerge. In the inward thrusts there always was a great similarity in the teachings of the prophets.

International coexistence for Nehru was a context wherein bristling differences were expected to get blunted. The world was inexorably moving towards growing interdependence and unity. Polarities were yielding place to parallel movements. Men have to learn to cherish the unifying forces of humanity with the distinctive characteristics of one's language, religion, culture and nationality. Diversity can prevail only when unity is recognized. Unity can grow only when diversity is respected. Democracy, secularism, international coexistence were thus united in Nehru's thinking by a single assertion of man's rationality and creativity that respected other opinions and attitudes and still believed in and worked for unity in action in so far as it was necessary.

Nehru believed that this age of increasing decolonization and racial equality was also an age of cultural efflorescence. He perhaps tacitly recognized what Professor Alfred Marshall once called the "Social Possibilities of Economic Chivalry." Nehru therefore assumed that the poor have a claim on the rich, the illiterate on the educated, the technologically backward on the technologically advanced. This claim is doubly blessed; it blesseth both the donor and the receiver. That is why he believed in democratic social change inside the country and did not hesitate to seek assistance from abroad for the developmental programmes of his country. He likewise never hesitated to reach out the hand of help to other countries. His basic chivalry was not just a personal attribute but an intellectual belief. The world with its mass awakening and interdependence would be perilously poised if the privileged and the powerful do not always feel, as Professor Gilbert Murray would have put it, the tug of *aidos* about them!

Seen in retrospect, Nehru's lifework was to try to modernize this old land of ours, to revive and free the latent energies of our people trapped in centuries of dead form, to change the ancient and sad face of this country into something that would once more vibrate with freshness, beauty and the joy of life. The chief instrument fashioned by him for this purpose was economic planning, based on law and justice and organized on a democratic and federal basis.

One is also struck, in retrospect, by the economy of organization with which Nehru sought to bring about this vast change over the face of our country. He was too firm a believer in individualism to set up a big and intricate organization through which he could translate his ideas into action. He would rather use his almost mystic powers of direct communion with the people. It was through this continuous dialogue between the people and himself that he was constantly trying to sift and clarify issues and bring the country ever closer to a revolution by consensus. People at the helm of the organization were not always perceptive of what he was trying to accomplish, nor was their will always so perfect as to enlarge the ambit of their action into translating his ideas. All this perhaps makes him appear in the light of a lone fighter, a solitary visionary.

Towards the end we find him growing more and more conscious of some of the conflicts inherent in the process of modernization and social change. One of these inescapable conflicts is between the forces of equality and justice and those of liberty and growth. Rapid economic growth, particularly in a democratic setup, calls for certain economic liberties and at least temporarily for the suspension of some of the disciplines which an egalitarian society is apt to impose upon itself. To the extent to which these emergent forces of liberty are allowed to grow uninhibited and given a free rein, to that extent claims of equality and justice must suffer at least a temporary setback. We see all around us the agonizing spectacle of this relentless conflict. New entrepreneurial forces are forging ahead while the great masses at the lowest rung of the economic and social ladder are being weighed down with lack of initiative and the growing indirect burdens of living. Nehru's sensitive mind did not fail to register the acute agony of this situation. It was unfortunately not given to him to resolve this conflict in a manner satisfactory to all and consistent with our basic political and economic framework.

The broad strategy of national development that he had evolved fitted the early phase of economic growth; it will prove equally relevant when the structural transformation is largely realized. It is during the mid-phase of the developmental cycle that serious difficulties are encountered in reconciling the claims of economic growth with those of social justice. Hence, in the twilight of his life Nehru turned to these problems with a new zest. He got some of his senior colleagues to withdraw from the government and urged them to devote their energies and experience to organizational work. Socialism which was earlier a teleological objective was sought to be made a functional force, too. He hoped that the Congress would provide leadership to the poor, through conjoint efforts, and help them to take advantage of the developmental activities. He was anxious to make equality an operational instrument rather than just a goal to be worked for. Tensions across the borders of India, internal sluggishness in the economy and his own failing health prevented him from asserting the new orientation. The direction of his efforts was however clear.

It is to this unfinished business that we have to turn. Like a giant of

yore Nehru has given a big heave to the traditional Indian society. We have started to feel the joy as well as the pain of change. We have to see that the joy of change increases while the pain of change abates. Basically, this is a matter of organization. Organizations will be endowed with the desired ethos, *elan* and initiative to the extent the fundamental dialogue between the leaders and the people is kept up. "As you think, so you become." Only when we are able to fill the organizational vacuum in the country in this manner, shall we be able to translate into reality the dream that Nehru and his innumerable followers and comrades-in-arms dreamt. This is the dream of filling this ancient land once again with the laughter and joy of living.



# Nehru: Social Justice and National Development

by

ALVA MYRDAL

## Introduction

I could not adequately convey to you how greatly privileged and at the same time deeply moved I felt when invited to participate in this Round Table in honour of Jawaharlal Nehru, or, more precisely, of his ideas. His world of thinking certainly was one that knew no frontiers. He was thoroughly at home in several worlds, in the Orient and in the Occident, in politics as well as in science. And he was always endeavouring to widen his horizons, to strike out beyond what was immediately within his grasp, to probe what history might have to teach and to experiment with new ideas born in the highly changing world of today.

May I introduce here a personal touch? I must recall that my very first visit to India was in order to participate in a seminar on Gandhiji's role in the modern world, organized like this one in co-operation between Unesco and the Indian Government. Prime Minister Nehru spoke at the inaugural session on 5 January, 1953 in the Central Hall of Parliament. This gave me an unforgettable impression. He spoke then in an incredibly honest and intellectually incisive way about the dilemma which I, for one, think was most deeply besetting his mind. He spoke of the "basic difficulty... of two ways of approaching a problem—the prophet's way, or if you like of the man of truth wedded to truth whatever happens, and the way of the politician or the statesman."<sup>1</sup> He was particularly articulate—to the astonishment of everybody—about the difficulties confronting the political leader. "Because although he sees the truth and wants to go that way, how is he to carry others with him unless others see it also? How is he to make them receptive to that?"<sup>2</sup> In this humble confession, I believe, Jawaharlal Nehru was also revealing what was after all perhaps his greatest role, the one he carried both as a burden and a joy: to be the teacher of his people—and, to some extent, of other peoples. This will also be a dominant theme in my paper, that the nationalist Nehru expressed his ideas, yes, acted them out chiefly in the role of a teacher and an intellectual and moral leader.

To continue the personal recollections by way of introduction: My own speech at the same occasion also centred on the problem of truth, especially in international affairs, but, for the sake of the seminar, it was in

*Gandhian Outlook and Techniques.* (New Delhi, 1953), p. 11.  
*Ibid.*, p. 12.

a philosophical vein and more concerned with the problem of "ends and means"—which creates, of course, always and everywhere the politician's main dilemma. Gandhiji's claim that means also must be "true," must be good, forced me to stress how uncomfortably uncompromising such a demand is. May I just quote one sentence, most directly of concern for our theme of today: "Trying to solve the tensions within nations implies working together towards a state of social justice, economic well-being and spiritual liberty for all human beings."

Well, that sounds good enough, as a turning of phrase often does in a speech. Still, the very speeches of those days—with more meaty content in the multitude of unquoted passages, if I may say so—could well be repeated today. The persistent dilemma in the world today as well as in individual countries is exactly that of the relationship between ends and means, between our professed ideals and the ways we continuously choose to implement them—or sell out in the name of "practical compromise." Still, in each individual country, this judgment whether the choice of "means" is good or bad lies very close to actual practical politics. And I want to forewarn my audience that I do not intend to go into exegesis of the applicability of Nehru's concepts of social justice and national development to India's problems of today. For that matter, I am not going to pass judgment on how he himself made his practical choices between ends and means in his active political decisions.

Thus as regards my theme, I wish to look upon Jawaharlal Nehru's role as a *great prophet of the ideals of social justice and of national development*, and not least as a prophet of the ideal of promoting their progress together—his vision of a social and economic development process which should at one and at the same time spell greater riches for the country and greater equality for its citizens. Once again, I repeat that I am not setting out to try to interpret and judge whether India has succeeded or not in implementing Nehru's ideals; I am not even going to study their applicability in India. I do however expressly want to try to analyse the interrelationship of these two ideas of economic progress and social equality in a universal setting.

(When I emphasize so much the character of a social vision in this central view of Nehru, and when I consequently stress his role as a teacher, preacher and persuader, my intention is also indirectly to indicate that Nehru's lasting importance was not dependent on his being very "scientific" in his interpretation.) His dedication to the goals of social justice and national development may, in scientific parlance, be said to have consisted in his embracing them as "valuations." He was not particularly concerned with attempts to clarify by thoroughgoing analysis the causal interrelationships between steps taken to promote these goals, whether in fact they reinforce each other or might at times compete with each other. Such scientific analysis should, of course, if it were available, greatly facilitate the choice of "means" to reach the "ends"—the real weight and effect of each contemplated policy step should be examined in relation to each existing

social situation, not only different in each country but also different in relation to each point in time and particularly to the level of development, i.e., the extent to which "social justice" and "national development" have already been instituted.

But science, and in our context this means social science, was not in the time of Nehru and is still not at all sufficiently equipped to present the field of interrelationships and thus not ready to help us solve the policy problem of choosing priorities—all such choices, of course, to be ultimately decided as political, not technical, ones in the light of our own valuations and ideals. The fact is that the very cardinal point remains in dispute, namely, whether it is necessary to promote first a fair degree of development, postponing somewhat the process of social equalization, or vice versa. Comparative studies of the course of development in different countries ought to be of help, but they are hardly more than begun. And the theoretical analyses of more specific relationships, referring to typical situations at various levels of development in one direction or the other, would also be of great advantage. I will return to this question as it refers to the problem under a more universal angle. But let us first take a look at how Jawaharlal Nehru approached this problem, so central to all endeavours to move society forwards and upwards.

*Nehru's philosophy: harmonization of goals*

In his visionary, yet so remarkably realistic, way Nehru clearly saw that the goals of social justice and national development were indivisible. They must be pursued together lest one or both of them be lost. Still, at different periods during his own life evolution he gave differing stress to one or other of the two ideals. It is therefore difficult to find quotations that irrevocably and indisputably set down exactly how he visualized their dynamic interplay. Particularly as he was not only a social philosopher but also a practical politician, he often, when seeking the means to realize these goals, faced the need to strike compromises, thus sometime more poignantly emphasizing one, sometime another one of them. It is therefore unavoidable that different passages from Nehru's published books and speeches have been variously interpreted, by some ascribing to him the "mistake" of prematurely favouring social equality and jeopardizing economic development, by others as "sinning" in exactly the opposite direction.

(In reality, Nehru's vision encompassed an even broader set of coherent values and social goals.) We may at least distinguish four elements belonging together in a vital complex: the strivings for national independence, for political democracy, for social justice and for economic development. And in this very broadbased goal-setting India has been making and is making a unique experiment, endeavouring to realize them all in one grand social act of creation, starting in all four respects from a situation that must be described as negating them all. In this respect, Indian endeavours must be said to have been unique; other countries adhering to these same goals

have come to do so through a much longer process of historical development and gradual evolution.

To an extent that should not be minimized, this complex of ideal strivings had its root in Indian traditions older than Nehru, although it may be truly said that he was the one to crystallize and modernize these ideas. In pointing to certain elements of tradition which Nehru epitomized it is certainly not my intention to ascribe any of them to the so-called cultural values of ancient India and still less to religious traditions, Hindu or others. These have rather to a large extent constituted shackles which modern India has had to, and still has to, free itself from. What is usually less prominently brought into the foreground is the "our tradition," i.e., that rare combination of new intellectual forces which from the end of the last century began to shape that new Indian thinking which we now call Nehru's.

In a nutshell, I would summarize both the impulses Nehru received and the new heights to which he brought these ideals in the following way:

There was in his background a living contact—not least by his intimate intellectual intercourse with Motilal Nehru—with the early *independence* movement. Nehru brought it forward to become an ideal of *national consolidation* and even "*emotional integration*."

There was also, from his boyhood on, the strong impulses from the *Swadeshi* movement, the economic self-sufficiency preached from the time of the partition of Bengal, foreboding a striving towards *economic development*, which by Nehru was modernized and purposively brought forward in the shape of *economic planning*, benefiting us he did also from impulses of Marxist readings and Soviet experiences.

There was, most dominantly of all, the teaching of Gandhi with his relentless demands for *social justice*. This commanding influence was brought forward by Nehru to thinking in terms of a whole system of *social reforms*, a thought pattern which he had in turn largely derived from his contacts with Fabian socialism.

Finally, there was already in pre-independence time expressed the avowed goal of political democracy, of *universal suffrage*. In Nehru's world of ideals this became perfected as a demand for *popular participation* in community affairs, expressed in his promotion of co-operatives but most clearly in his work for *panchayat raj*.

This is, it goes without saying, a simplified scheme. Nehru would be the last to say that he "worked it alone." To a large extent, the evolution of ideas represents a maturation process on which many persons and many forces have left their mark. But I have wanted to sketch a picture with lines showing both the coherence between Nehru's ideas and those of the heritage given to him by his time, and at the same time indicating how indisputably he expressed them, modernized them, synthesized them, thus in turn developed them into a mighty factor of influencing both his time and the future.

## SOCIAL JUSTICE AND NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

To get a more precise picture of the synthesis Nehru achieved it may be worth while to consider also in what respects he differed from those who had been his *gurus* or at least started him on these roads of philosophizing about society. His contacts with the early independence movement were, as I have just stated, personified in Nehru's own father, Motilal. When reading the rich literature, provided to us in this seminar, I have been deeply impressed by a double fact which I think is not usually recognized, at least not in the more popular writings: on the one hand, how remarkably freethinking, outspoken, liberal, yes, rebellious Motilal Nehru had already been before his "conversion" to Gandhism, and—on the other hand—how during the long and intensive correspondence between father and son, Jawaharlal Nehru was from his earliest years exceedingly independent, critical and intellectual as was evidently his natural inclination, thus many steps in advance of this already very advanced father.<sup>3</sup> When Motilal was still a leader among the Moderates in the independence movement—and long before Gandhi had returned to India—his understanding of the social handicap of India was clear. In a speech at Agra in 1909 he said: "Imagine for a moment that there was no caste system in India, that Hindus and Musalmans and the numerous subdivisions of these two great communities sank their differences and met together as children of a common mother; that the ladies of India instead of being shut behind the prison walls of the *zenana* were properly educated; that there were no longer in the population of India the children of premature mothers and underdeveloped fathers. Suppose we reached such a social, moral and physical perfection, could any power on earth keep us from obtaining the fullest political privileges enjoyed by the most advanced nations of the world?" He later emulated his son in reversing the timetable: Political independence must come first—still, the whole width of the social and economic revolution that was necessary "in order to get meaning and content to independence" was for Jawaharlal Nehru to understand.

From his contacts with Gandhi came, of course, the most compelling impulse to work for the ideal of social justice. But where Gandhi in the final instance leaned heavily on the need—and the possibility—to change the hearts of men in order to achieve greater equality in the caste-ridden, poverty-stricken and sex-prejudiced India of his time, Nehru, although equally brave in his missionary fervour, was much more of the modern rationalist who understood the role of legislative social reforms in changing institutions and thus in achieving more guaranteed equality through structuralized social schemes. In this he was obviously influenced by Fabian socialism. He also carried the demands for equalization farther than Gandhi, at least insofar as the abolition of economic privileges was concerned. Nehru himself has repeatedly stated that he was more of a Socialist than Gandhiji. Some of their clashes derived directly from differences on this account. Nehru refers to it repeatedly in his *Autobiography*, first to Gandhi's

<sup>3</sup> See particularly B. R. Nanda, *The Nehrus : Motilal and Jawaharlal*. (London, 1962).

statement about "the dumb millions for whom Congress will sacrifice everything." But: "With all his keen intellect and passion for bettering the downtrodden and oppressed, why does he support a system, which creates this misery and waste? He seeks a way out, it is true, but is not that way to the past barred and bolted?"<sup>4</sup>

The deviation from Gandhi was, of course, patently clear in regard to economic policies where Nehru followed his greater interventionist leanings to an all-out advocacy for planning. Let it first be said, however, that the heritage from Gandhi probably was the direct cause of India including much more than just "economic" development in the plans. When Nehru said, in pleading for the acceptance of the First Five Year Plan, that "Planning consists of integrating and having an over-all view of the general conditions and then trying to progress all along the line, given certain priorities,"<sup>5</sup> he represented this attempt to encompass both social justice and economic development in one and the same process. In reality, planning came to consist much more definitely in economic planning, where Nehru shared the zeal exemplified in the major revolutions of our time, in the Soviet Union and in China, to engender rapid change. His visits to these two countries greatly influenced him to be something of a "historian in a hurry," wanting to demonstrate that India, through democratic means, should be able to make equally fast advances. The emphasis on democratic process, of course, distinguishes his creed from that of these rival political systems, from which, nevertheless, he derived considerable inspiration to think in rationalistic terms.

The determination to create a synthesis of social justice and economic development became, not least under the intellectual leadership and gradually also the political leadership of Nehru himself, the major characteristic of Congress resolutions long before Independence. Later this double goal became inscribed in the Constitution and in its Directive Principles. It also marked the five-year plans. In the political history of the world this constitutes one of the major attempts to consolidate progress of a people along this double avenue.

Still, it may perhaps be said that in the beginning the theme of "social justice" rang through with a louder voice, while economic development later came more to the foreground. It should not be overlooked that to a considerable extent this is but a reflex of the different functions of the declarations: some belong to the period of making resolutions in the name of large masses without political power, while others belong to a time when policies have to be implemented and plans are formulated in the name of a government responsible for actual realization of reforms, which perforce must be gradual. If I make a short catalogue of quotations, it is therefore not intended to and should not be used to pinpoint any contradiction. The double goal is never abandoned, although sometimes one and sometimes another of its facets may be brought more into the limelight.

<sup>4</sup> Jawaharlal Nehru, *Autobiography*. (London, 1936), p. 528.

<sup>5</sup> Speech before the Economic Planning Conference, New Delhi, 1950.

When elected President of the Congress, at Lahore in 1929, Nehru made a sweeping verdict of the historical differences between India and the West:

*Great as was the success of India in evolving a stable society she failed in a vital particular, and because she failed in this, she fell and remains fallen. No solution was found for the problem of equality. India deliberately ignored this and built up her social structure on inequality, and we have the tragic consequences of this policy in the millions of our people who till yesterday were suppressed and had little opportunity for growth.*

*When Europe fought her wars of religion and Christians massacred each other in the name of their Saviour, India was tolerant. Having obtained some measure of religious liberty, Europe sought after political liberty, and political and legal equality. Having attained these also she finds that they mean very little without economic liberty and equality. And so today politics have ceased to have much meaning, and the most vital question is that of social and economic equality.*

*India also will have to find a solution to this problem, and until she does so her political and social structure cannot have stability.<sup>6</sup>*

At the Karachi session of the Congress, 1931, the resolution formulated the ideal in the following way: "In order to end the exploitation of the masses, political freedom must include real economic freedom for the starving millions."

There is no need to follow how the Indian National Congress, prompted by Gandhi and Nehru, made egalitarianism a constitutive element in its faith in *swaraj* and how increasingly explicit resolutions were formulated, thus committing an independent India to carry through a revolution, social and economic as well as political. This was, in Nehru's mind, a promise given to the people before Independence, the one that should give deeper meaning to independence. In the Directive Principles, accompanying the Constitution of India (1950), the same ideals are expressed, although now with a greater emphasis on practical details—so much so that you may find quotations that remind you more of the ideals of social reform of Fabianism and the Webbs, rather than of Gandhiji. Thus, these principles "visualize an economic and social order based on equality of opportunity, social justice, the right to work, the right to an adequate wage and a measure of social security for all citizens."<sup>7</sup>

In this context, it should not be overlooked that tremendous reforms, aimed at consolidating social justice, were carried through in the early reign of independent India. I need only remind us of the laws against caste discrimination, the Hindu Code Bill emancipating particularly the women—and the young—from the "prison of the *zenana*" which the joint family system was becoming in a society bent on modernization and already

<sup>6</sup> Jawaharlal Nehru, *India's Freedom*. (London, 1962), p. 9.

<sup>7</sup> *The Draft Outline, First Five Year Plan*, (New Delhi, 1951), p. 11.

increasingly mobile. Further, the persistent encouragement of education for girls, the frank and remarkably early sponsorship of family planning. Also in regard to property rights certain decisive steps were taken: besides the politically determined abdication of the princes and thus a large-scale reduction of feudalism, legislation against *zamindari* rights went in the same anti-feudal direction. Added up, all such reforms amount to a formidable work for social justice in India. To a very large extent the leadership came from Nehru. And I believe we can be certain that with a man of different idealistic make-up at the helm of government they would not have materialized.

That part of social justice which consists in economic equalization has been slower in coming. But there was in Nehru's world of thinking no letting up of radical fervour. Just to choose one succinct quotation we may recall how Nehru stated when presenting the Third Five Year Plan to Parliament that one of the objectives of Indian planning was "the reduction of inequalities in income and wealth and a more even distribution of economic power."

On the side of economic development, the discussion became, as I have stated earlier, by necessity more and more technical as implementation of plans became the main task. The decisive step, again largely and perhaps solely due to the influence of Nehru, was just to choose planning. Planning meant bending all resources of the country into a common effort. The development of India's economic resources was an overriding goal, but one that should be of benefit to the whole people—in this way the synthesis with social justice was always there. I might choose at random a quotation from Nehru: "Planning is essential because otherwise we waste our resources which are very limited. Planning does not mean a collection of projects or schemes but a thought-out approach of how to strengthen the base and pace of progress so that the community advanced on all fronts."

I have chosen this particular quotation in order, among other things, to underline that although Nehru was a social engineer in the sense of having the inclination and the imagination to grasp the idea of social change being induced by central planning, his role was not to do the detailed engineering work. Thus it seems to me futile to use him as a *guru* for how socialism should be implemented, with how much or how little of public ownership of the means of production; or how the management of economic activities should be distributed to respectively the public, the co-operative and the private sectors; or how priorities should be established between various types of investment; or how decision-making should be divided between central, regional and local authorities. These questions, after all, refer to *means*, not to *ends*. And by their very nature the means must be chosen differently for every situation, slightly varying as they are both to time and to country.

The main thing is rather to underline how Nehru, despite increasing

<sup>8</sup> Note in *A. I. C. C. Economic Review*, August 15, 1958, reprinted in Jawaharlal Nehru, *Speeches*, Vol. IV, p. 122.



difficulties of various kinds and despite the continuing economic plight of his beloved country, yes, despite mounting opposition to his leadership, Nehru never abandoned which to him was the very essence of strivings. That the promise of both social justice and economic development should be kept in the country he was to leave behind him, was an overriding obligation for him. This is evidenced by the amount of preaching and teaching to which he devoted his time, attempting to use his power of persuasion in speech after speech, often many a day. He sought to get the whole people saturated by this ideology, that India's task was to achieve social and economic revolution—under democratic rule and under conditions so much more difficult than those of the West. "In Europe," he said once, "an economic revolution preceded a real political revolution, and so when the latter came, certain resources had been built up by economic changes. In Asia, political revolution came first, followed immediately by demands for social development, which could not easily be fulfilled because of economic backwardness and lack of resources."<sup>9</sup> Thus is stated what became the giant crux for Nehru—as it is to this day for the whole world of under-developed countries. The quotation is taken from a glorious speech which I had the privilege to listen to. It would be hampering to quote it in full, even as it so admirably summarizes his main thinking on this subject of most vital interest to him.

With these words ringing in our minds—"demands for social development and lack of economic resources"—I want to close this section of my paper, turning away from the concentration on India which was the natural setting for Nehru's thinking and action. We should turn instead towards a consideration of these same problematics in more general terms. Does the synthesis of the goals of social justice and economic development—both being the concern of our whole world—have a universal application? Is it really possible to harmonize them or are they by nature antagonistic, i.e., one by its nature taking precedence over the other?

*Interrelationship between measures to achieve social justice and measures to achieve economic development*

At the outset we must grant that Nehru's observation in the last quoted statement contains an indisputable truth: it is easier to achieve social equality at higher levels of living. What is typical of the welfare state now developed in the richer countries is exactly that combination of rapid economic growth with redistribution of real income through social reforms.

But a very different question is: where should the beginning be made in countries that have not obtained high levels of living? It is perhaps most commonly believed that "social justice," particularly in its aspect of income equalization, must be postponed for some time in order to come to grips with the problem of economic growth, thus utilizing available resources for long-range investments and permitting capital accumulation.

<sup>9</sup> Jawaharlal Nehru, *India Today and Tomorrow*. (Azad Memorial Lectures, New Delhi, 1959), p. 11.

Disregarding the fact that all such terms are rather vague and indeterminate, we must recognize that there are conflicting views on the possibility of realizing the double goal. We are, as a matter of fact, faced with a dispute of world dimensions as to a correct interpretation of the history by which Europe and America arrived at the stage which now enables them to pursue both goals. Many people in countries which are still underdeveloped, and which experience very great difficulties in combining progress in both directions, are apt to point to those aspects of history which seem to say that economic development must take precedence, leaving social justice to be implemented later. They usually do so by pointing to the period of early industrialization in Great Britain, which in many ways constitutes a "trauma of the modernization process" as an era of proletarianization did follow. Actually, income differences increased and the level of living of the British masses probably did not rise before 1850, i.e., two or three generations after the onset of industrialization.

What is usually less noted is another lesson from history, namely, that the process, both in terms of rate of economic growth and of income equalization, was considerably quicker in countries which started their industrialization period later. Partly this is due to the fact that they were followers rather than pioneers, a benefit shared by the presently underdeveloped countries. But their more harmonious development is partly due to the fact that they had had time to carry through certain reforms of the "social justice" variety. First and foremost among them was the achievement of universal or near universal literacy—which made possible both greater equality and greater efficiency—heightening the sense of participation on the part of the whole people and inculcating in them much more rapidly the modernization ideal. This was typical of Germany, yes, France. It was even more pronounced in the cases of the U.S. and Scandinavia, otherwise so different but similar in the rapidity of development and also in the inclusion of agriculture in the modernization process. It left Britain for a long part of our modern history, and perhaps even at present, as a country lagging behind, in the rapidity of economic development on a national scale, i.e., disregarding the economics of colonialism, and also lagging behind in terms of social equality.

So much for the analogies drawn from history. By and large, *there are no real lessons to be drawn for the countries now starting out on a course, wanting to realize both economic development and social justice.* Too many factors are different, which makes direct analogies inapplicable. First and foremost among these is the fact that in the Western welfare states the development process was unplanned which made it a more long-winding one. And in the Soviet Union, where it was planned, the historical example set may be said to be unique in many ways. I need only refer to a couple of facts: (a) the starting level was, after all, considerably higher than is customary in the countries nowadays seeking a prescription for development; (b) the early history of violent ups and downs in regard to property rights and economic distribution among the population can in

their historical uniqueness neither be disregarded nor considered as a "model."

Both historical experiences and scientific exploration of different courses for development are still insufficient to give any clear indication as to the inherent relationship between advances towards economic growth and social justice, or, to simplify it, between increases in production and increases in consumption. Yet, having had the privilege of looking into the workshop of a scientific approach to development problems, particularly as represented by one of the specialists, namely, the Swedish economist Gunnar Myrdal, I would venture the statement that there is rather *a positive relationship between increases in productivity and—at least certain aspects of—increases in consumption levels, when the start is to be made from very low levels in both regards*. The two sets of goals presuppose each other in such situations as represented by poor countries with great initial inequalities. Progress towards one supports rather than detracts from progress towards the other. Thus, policies in pursuit of them can be made mutually reinforcing. This would mean that Nehru's idea of harmony between the goals of social justice and economic development is more adequate than the negation preached by the sceptics. The line of such reasoning would focus on the following main arguments:

1) The low levels of consumption, prevalent for the great masses in underdeveloped countries where social and economic inequality persists, hamper economic development because of their detrimental effect on productivity. Low levels of nutrition, health and education particularly mitigate against higher labour efficiency. Thus, speaking generally, *a rise in consumption in the lowest economic strata and in regard to items of food intake, health care and educational level, should have beneficial effects on productivity*.

This is a situation which does not allow direct comparison with the present situation of richer countries. If in France, practically the whole population is already well nourished, kept fairly healthy and is universally literate with additional education largely available, any increase in regard to food intake, health services and education becomes only marginal and does not directly affect productivity. In underdeveloped countries the situation is different. The margin is so wide that increases in this kind of consumption are practically a precondition for higher labour efficiency and thus for productivity in general.

Our present knowledge about the interdependence of development factors will then support Nehru's intuitive conviction that to raise the level of living of the poor is productive and that work for social justice might well be harmonized with work for economic development.

2) Social inequality acts as a definite obstacle to, on the one hand, mobility and, on the other hand, competition—two necessary ingredients in a process of economic development. This in turn may be looked upon

from two different aspects. One is directly related to economic inequality and may be expressed in positive terms: income equalization, i.e., increasing income and wealth stirs up the social process, brings forward a greater reservoir of talent and also leads to income utilization which in turn creates modernized demands. The second relates more to the effects of stagnation which are inimical to development, insofar as the heritage of traditions and attitudes acts as a drawback against modernization.

It ought perhaps to be explicitly stated that while I have been stressing these instrumental values of progress towards social development, or social justice, this is not intended to belittle the independent value, the value *per se* of such progress. Perhaps the harmonization of the two goals can most simply be expressed by pointing towards the possibility of a process that mobilizes the whole population and makes them participants in the march towards a richer future. On the other hand, who could really believe in the efficacy of such a process if large masses of the people for a long time to come were left in stagnation, inertia and inept on account of hunger and ignorance? And still more, if these masses, largely thanks to their lack of modernization, grow by what has been called the population explosion increasingly faster than their productivity?

The need for harmonizing the two goals of economic development and social justice should however not only be looked at from the positive angle, where I have tried to show how advances in both directions support each other. For countries setting out on a new course of development one has also to be aware of the risk that a lopsided advance in one direction may aggravate the situation in the other one. The risk is particularly serious that economic reforms, if unaccompanied by a very well-planned social concomitant, may well increase inequality, social as well as economic. One example is widely recognized, namely, that any economic advance of an enclave character may benefit only a restricted group of people. Reports to this effect are repeatedly broadcast over the world, emanating sometimes from Africa and sometimes from Asia or Latin America. It is also illustrated in various evaluation studies of the great Indian experiment in community development, which report that attempts at innovation at the local level, from fertilizers to latrines, have largely or at least in the first instance benefited the relatively opulent groups in villages. This is not to be made the object of a simplified criticism. Those persons who are alert and capable of grasping the new opportunities offered will also utilize them to a greater development effect. Nevertheless, a general claim must be raised that if greater ingenuity were applied in the world, the hidden reserves of much greater numbers of people could be mobilized. Stagnation somewhere carries a risk for stagnation everywhere—the development effect may be consumed by the rising numbers of, and increased hunger among, those who are left behind.

In one field where I, in my capacity as a one-time social scientist, have had the privilege of gaining some more specialized insight, this risk of

creating greater inequality and establishing new drags on development is particularly imminent, namely, in regard to education and training. In the special situation when a country starts from a very low level of education and schooling—and attempts vigorously to step up enrolment in educational institutions—there is a great probability that those who take advantage of the new facilities will predominantly belong to the “haves” rather than the “have-nots.” The effect may well be an increase in social inequality and but a small gain in economic development. It is of course not my intention to blame the school systems as such for such effects. Factors which incur the danger of a growth of social discrimination and of insufficient returns in terms of development capacity may be enumerated as follows:

- (i) A particularly risky period, although it may be a transitory one, is experienced by many countries where education has hitherto been underdeveloped and characterized by a greater increase in enrolment in secondary and tertiary education, while primary education and adult literacy lag behind. As “education” has previously been a class privilege—you might say, practically, a class *signum*—it may continue to increase this distinction, making more young people “educated” and presumably giving them a “better” education, but still investing chiefly in the middle and upper class strata who have the economic sustenance to let their youngsters continue schooling through several years.
- (ii) In order to change this unintentional effect several concomitant reforms would have to be introduced, in addition to mere opportunities of schooling. First and foremost, primary education would have to be made universally available and compulsorily carried on to the completion of courses so as to give all social groups the same chance to enter the gates to higher education. Secondly, the cost not only of tuition but of maintenance during the school years would have to be borne by the community or at least indirectly subsidized in the name of equality of opportunities. As long as the influx to higher schools is only determined by opening enrolment facilities, secondary and higher education will tend to perpetuate and even increase class inequality.
- (iii) This effect is aggravated if the kind of education offered is mainly of an academic character, separating out the “educated” who are spared from manual work from the others, the “working class,” who are supposed to be the only ones to soil their hands. The dignity of all kinds of work must be established through a new kind of curriculum in schools.
- (iv) Even more economically wasteful and socially inequitable is a situation where a great number of children start primary school without finishing the stage that assures them of lasting functional literacy. An enormous wastage of “dropouts” is actually occur-

ring at present in countries starting new schemes of development. In economic terms it entails great losses, so great that the cost calculated per pupil who actually completes his course is not much lower than in the rich countries. Also socially the risk is obvious, as the dropouts constitute a negative selection and decline in status in comparison with those who go through school. New methods must be found to guarantee, more or less, that pupils who are favoured by being enrolled in a primary school should also be under obligation to finish a prescribed number of grades that would be sufficient to assure effective literacy.

- (v) In situations where the whole population of school age is not given even a primary education, the risk is that attendance at the primary stage of education will already tend to establish the aspiration of a social privilege of those "educated." The remedy is only one, as has been experienced by countries like mine, namely, to advance as quickly as even meagre economic resources allow to a stage where the whole population is literate. As long as this cannot be done by providing schools for all children, the wiser course must be to make the adults literate by quick methods.

Imperfections in the educational systems are constituting unnecessary drags on development, even if we consider as hitherto only the quantitative aspect. I need only briefly allude to the obvious truth that the quality and content of education are decisive factors in overcoming traditions and beliefs inimical to development, and in creating the attitudes and skills which are prerequisites for modernization. The main conclusion is that few items are so "productive" as in terms of labour, efficiency and manpower utilization as the kind of collective "consumption" entailed in a well-planned educational system. And I know of no other item which can have such a fundamental effect on equalization both of opportunities and of social status of the individuals. Thus: harmony of interests could well be made to prevail.

In conclusion, I want to return again from the specific to the general and state, on the basis of all I know, that Nehru had a message not only for his country but for the world when he preached this harmony of social justice and economic development. As I have wanted to be objective and frank, I have *not* stated that he had a full-fledged programme of implementation—which after all can only be detailed in relation to specific times and circumstances. I have not even said that he had a clear, consistent and scientifically tested conception of the character of interrelationships in the social and economic world. This must be based on a much deeper analysis of facts and theories than are so far mastered even by the social scientists of today. But I have ventured to state that he was right in his broad vista. His intuition was so right that we must call it wisdom. We must all ardently wish that the world be guided by his kind of wisdom and his dedication to noble ideals.

# Nehru: A Tribute

by

B.G. GAFUROV

As is known, we Soviet scientists wholeheartedly supported the proposal to hold an international round table conference on the role played in the modern world by the outstanding statesman and political figure of our time, Jawaharlal Nehru.

The name of Jawaharlal Nehru is well known in the Soviet Union. Workers and peasants, scholars and students, men and women of all occupations say it with love and respect. Homage paid to Jawaharlal Nehru in our country vividly reflects the amity of the Soviet people towards the fraternal people of India whose great son Jawaharlal Nehru was. Nehru was an incarnation of the best traits of his people, a living embodiment of their centuries-old culture, wisdom, love for peace and humbleness.

Everyone who had a chance to see Jawaharlal Nehru retains in his memory his noble spiritual face, his kind smile and intent eyes. All of us remember his snow-white cap, the modest traditional tunic and the inviolable fresh rose in his buttonhole. Nehru's entire appearance was in complete harmony with his inner world, his nature and aspirations. He was a fighter for the bright future of his country; he fought against colonialism and for peace and friendship among all nations of the world.

We in our country know well and greatly appreciate the contribution made by Jawaharlal Nehru to the consolidation of peace and progress. We are also well aware of his outstanding role as one of the leaders of the national liberation struggle, and of the tremendous work he did as India's Prime Minister.

The name of Jawaharlal Nehru is dear to the Soviet people also because he was a staunch champion of friendship and co-operation between the peoples of India and the Soviet Union. Nehru's works published in the Russian language—*Autobiography*, *The Discovery of India*, and selected speeches on India's foreign policy—evoked a wide response among the Soviet public. Many prominent Soviet public figures, men of letters and arts wrote about Jawaharlal Nehru with genuine admiration. Soviet scholars study with great interest his life and work. We in the Soviet Union are doing our best to strengthen and develop the ties of friendship between the peoples of our countries.

While thinking of Jawaharlal Nehru one is always amazed at the immensity of what he was able to accomplish during his lifetime, at the bright imprint he left in the memory of people, and at the greatness of his influence on the solution of the most vital problems of our contemporary world. No doubt, he was a brilliant and unique personality, a greatly talented man,

a man of profound intellect and erudition, of fiery temperament, iron will and tremendous charm. There is testimony to this effect from many of those who knew him personally, but the best evidence has been provided by his multifarious activities. We know Nehru the scholar and Nehru the diplomat, Nehru the publicist and Nehru the orator, Nehru the statesman and Nehru the leader of mass movements.

However, with all the variety of his talents and activities, he possessed something which made him a man of high integrity and was the essence of that noble soul. What was it? Many people pondered over this question, and each gave his own reply, his own explanation. I, too, shall take the liberty of trying to answer it.

Jawaharlal Nehru was a great humanist, in the broadest sense of the word. One may say that love for man and admiration for his creative powers were his main features. "How amazing is this spirit of man," affirmed Nehru. "In spite of innumerable failings, man, throughout the ages, has sacrificed his life and all he held dear for an ideal, for truth, for faith, for country and honour. That ideal may change but that capacity for self-sacrifice continues, and, because of that, much may be forgiven to man, and it is impossible to lose hope for him. In the midst of disaster, he has not lost his dignity or his faith in the values he cherished."<sup>1</sup>

Nehru's humanism was not an abstract love for man. It was not confined to an admiration for his creative powers. His humanism had a far deeper meaning. The present and the future of man, the shaping of a free personality, comprehensively and harmoniously developed, that is what was of real concern to Nehru. He showed great interest in the problems of education, culture and science. Pandit Nehru regarded our century as the age of science, of the limitless progress of human mind, the age of democracy and humaneness.

At the same time, Jawaharlal Nehru knew that the future of each individual is inseparable from the future of his country and of his people. He emphasized that society actively influences the individual's development and mentality. The influence of society on the individual becomes particularly apparent at the time of sharp revolutionary upheavals, or, as Nehru used to say, "mass upheavals and revolutionary movements." They "encourage and bring out the personality of those who constitute the masses or side with them, and at the same time they suppress psychologically and stifle those who differ from them."<sup>2</sup>

Jawaharlal Nehru repeatedly stressed that the greatness of a person lies in his links with the masses of the people. Nehru believed that only that leader can have a place in history who has embodied the hopes and aspirations of his people. It is characteristic of Nehru that the criterion for all of his opinions on various historical figures, both in India and abroad, was to what extent they expressed the vital interests of their people. Mahatma Gandhi was, in his eyes, a great leader of the Indian nation

<sup>1</sup> Jawaharlal Nehru, *The Discovery of India*, (Bombay, 1961), p. 16.

<sup>2</sup> Jawaharlal Nehru, *Autobiography*, (London, 1936), p. 68.



precisely because of his close ties with the people of India.

According to Nehru's own admission, he was always attracted by those men in history who represented the spirit of quest, who were striving for change, and who were true fighters for the happiness and progress of mankind. Jawaharlal Nehru paid a tribute of deep respect to V.I. Lenin, and invariably spoke with admiration of his revolutionary activities. He saw in Lenin the leader of the working people who had a profound understanding of the vital needs and feelings of the masses and gave them a most vivid expression.

### *Faith in his people*

It seems to us that the strength of Nehru and the secret of his tremendous popularity and international prestige have their roots, first of all, in his inseparable ties with his people, and in his profound understanding of the soul of the Indian people and of their innermost hopes and aspirations. "Our eyes were always turned towards our own people," wrote Nehru. "It was the building up of that real inner strength of the people that we were after, knowing that the rest would inevitably follow."<sup>3</sup>

What is Jawaharlal Nehru's "discovery of India?" We believe that, in the first place, it is his turning to his people, his ability to discern in millions of simple Indians colossal creative energy. "What could we not do with these people under better conditions and with greater opportunities opening out to them?" exclaimed Nehru. Despite poverty, backwardness, enslavement, "there was also a mellowness and a gentleness, the cultural heritage of thousands of years, which no amount of misfortune had been able to rub off."<sup>4</sup>

We, the Soviet people, admire Nehru's great faith in his people, the faith that always gave him strength and inspiration in the struggle for their liberation. I would like to cite only one example. At the time of colonial enslavement, almost ten years prior to India's freedom, Pandit Nehru, while visiting Rabindranath Tagore at Shantiniketan, requested the great writer and thinker to write the national song for the future independent India. Not even for a minute had Nehru doubted that the Indian people would be victorious in the struggle for independence and would throw off for ever the chains of hateful slavery.

Nehru's humanism always went hand in hand with an intolerance of everything that mutilated, crushed and strangled the people. He worked to remove obstacles in the way of man's emancipation, to create conditions for the efflorescence of the individual and of the people as a whole.

In the course of the fight for India's national regeneration, Nehru came to the ever-strengthening conviction that all forms of oppression, all survivals of feudal exploitation, religious fanaticism, advocacy of racial inequality and disparagement of the role of a people in history, in brief,

<sup>3</sup> *The Discovery of India*, p. 36.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 46.

colonialism, fascism, imperialism, etc., were and would be obstacles to the all-round development of every individual as well as of the entire mankind. Especially sharp was his criticism of colonialism and imperialism. He passionately exposed colonialists who for centuries had been hampering and crippling India's progress, hindering her advance, reducing millions and millions of Indians to the state of abject poverty, dooming them to starvation. Throughout his life Nehru remained an undaunted enemy of oppression and inequality. That is why even in the years when the people of India were fighting for freedom Nehru would stress that the attainment of political independence must be followed by important measures to ensure all-round social, economic, political and intellectual progress for the benefit of the Indian masses. Independent India always associates Nehru's name with the formulation and implementation of such essential policies as the industrialization of the country, the setting up of the public sector, the carrying out of five-year plans, development of agriculture and renaissance of Indian national culture.

Jawaharlal Nehru never ceased to think of the future of his country. But, for him, the future of India was inseparable from that of the world, of mankind as a whole. He pointed out that his country needed appropriate conditions for creation and renovation. And lasting world peace was one of such conditions. Because, said Nehru, the dreams of the future new India would be shattered, if war came down upon our world already torn by worry and anxiety.

The future of world civilization was also of great concern to Nehru. He clearly realized that peace is one of the major prerequisites for the fulfilment of the magnificent humanistic aspirations of mankind, a precondition for the progress of humanity, of every nation and of every man. "Our task," said he in one of his speeches, "is the preservation of peace, and, indeed, of our civilization. To this task let us bend our energies and find fellowship and strength in each other."<sup>5</sup>

Nehru the humanist revolted against wars, against the spirit of militarism and destruction, not simply because wars hamper the creative effort of peoples and nations and destroy material values. He believed that war and militarism mutilate the spirit of men, intellectually debase them. He once said:

*We have built up a great civilization and its achievements are remarkable. It holds the promise of even greater achievements in the future. But while these material achievements are very great, somehow we appear to be slipping away from the very essence of civilization. Ultimately, culture and civilization rest in the mind and behaviour of man and not in the material evidence of it that we see around us. In times of war the civilizing process stops and we go back to some barbarous phase of the human mind.<sup>6</sup>*

<sup>5</sup> Jawaharlal Nehru, *Speeches 1949—1953*. (New Delhi, 1954), p. 136.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 134.

And Nehru actively defended peace, looked for and found ways to strengthen and consolidate it. As the Head of India's Government since Independence and until his death, Nehru personally participated in working out and implementing India's foreign policy. He made an important contribution to the formulation and pursuance of non-alignment which he declared to be the major course of India's foreign policy. He advocated general and complete disarmament, prohibition of nuclear weapons, peaceful settlement of controversies between states. It is important to note that Nehru regarded the principles of peaceful coexistence as a major rule of international relations in our times. We in the Soviet Union highly valued Nehru's efforts against war and for peace and peaceful coexistence between states with different social systems.

Jawaharlal Nehru's foreign policy and work show him to be a follower of the age-old Indian humanistic and peace-loving traditions. "I hope," said he in 1947, "that while India will no doubt play a great part in all the material spheres, she will always lay stress on the spirit of humanity and I have no doubt in my mind that ultimately in this conflict that is confronting the world the human spirit will prevail over the atom bomb."<sup>7</sup>

I happened to meet Jawaharlal Nehru both in my country and in his country, as well as abroad. Especially memorable for me have been my meetings with Pandit Nehru in 1961 and also in 1964. In 1961 I attended the Conference of the Non-aligned States in Belgrade as Editor-in-Chief of *Asia and Africa To-day*. I was greatly impressed by Nehru's modesty and simplicity. He was always the first to arrive at the conference sessions and never put on airs or showed off. It was pleasant to watch how politely, cordially and kindly he treated everybody who approached him.

In January 1964 I met Nehru at the 26th International Congress of Orientalists in Delhi. His stimulating speech showed his deep understanding of the tremendous importance of oriental studies as a branch of science and aroused great interest among all participants in the Congress. But we could see that Nehru was very tired. And soon we learnt that he was gravely ill. The Soviet delegation had an arrangement to be received by him soon after the Congress, but unfortunately it could not be possible because of his illness.

Jawaharlal Nehru always conversed with Soviet scholars with great interest. There was hardly a delegation from the USSR that Nehru did not receive, showing kind attention both to eminent scholars and to young people just entering the field of science. Possessing deep knowledge of the centuries-old culture of his own people and of the best achievements of world civilization, Jawaharlal Nehru attached extremely great importance to the promotion of scientific and cultural relations between India and the USSR. He regarded scientific and cultural exchanges between peoples and the establishment of personal contacts between scientific and cultural

<sup>7</sup> Jawaharlal Nehru, *India's Foreign Policy : Selected Speeches*. (New Delhi, 1961), p. 13.

workers as an instrument of promoting peace, progress and co-operation of nations.

*Son of his times*

Jawaharlal Nehru always was a champion of friendship between the Soviet Union and India. Even at the time of the fight for national liberation he repeatedly spoke and wrote of its necessity. It is significant that as far back as 1936 while addressing the Friendship-with-USSR rally at Lucknow, Jawaharlal Nehru called upon his countrymen to offer the hand of friendship to their great northern neighbour. We shall never forget that Jawaharlal Nehru was one of those farseeing statesmen of the world who always emphasized the inspiration the Great October Socialist Revolution has given to India and the entire mankind.

The great son of India, Jawaharlal Nehru, acutely sensed his time, its growing tempo, upheavals and turns, its link with the past and its renovating influence, and the trends and direction of its movement. Nehru always strove to rely on the revolutionary activity of the masses, the people of his country. He kept abreast with the times, and he was the son of his times. He was well aware of the continuing struggle for the rights, freedom and perfection of man, and of the efforts to create conditions for harmonious and all-round development of human beings.

So, if we are now asked what makes Jawaharlal Nehru important for the world of today, we would answer: His work for the triumph of the ideals of humanism, progress, freedom, equality and justice. And if we are asked what is the essence of his noble personality, what accounted for his integrity and significance, we would answer: Love for human beings, love for progress.

Nehru was a humanist, and this is Nehru.

# Nehru: A Retrospect

*by*

B.R. NANDA

The purpose of this paper is to offer a retrospective view of Nehru's role in the modern world in the context of his own life. A good deal has been said about the influence of Gandhi on Nehru. The equation between these two great Indians offers a fascinating study. It was a unique relationship; it evolved over a considerable period; it was complex; it was fruitful for them and for the causes nearest to their hearts. To see this relationship in perspective it may be useful to bear chronology in mind. Despite the westernized atmosphere of his Allahabad home and the influence of his European tutors Jawaharlal's nationalism had sprouted long before he met Gandhi. It asserted itself when he was still in his teens and dreamt of "brave deeds, of how, sword in hand, I would fight for India and help in freeing her." Though he was barely 16 when he arrived at Harrow, young Nehru's letters to his father in 1905-6 reveal an unmistakable sympathy with the extremist wing of the Indian National Congress. In 1912, he returned to India and started as his father's junior at the Allahabad bar. His heart was however not in his profession. The "technicalities and trivialities," as he put it, of the legal profession did not interest him. He was not tempted by the prospects of a lucrative practice. He wanted to have a cause to live for and die for. He worked in the local Red Cross; he toyed with the idea of joining Gokhale's Servants of India Society as a life-member; he collected funds for the struggle which the Indian community in South Africa was waging for fundamental human rights. In the summer of 1917 after the arrest of Mrs. Annie Besant, Nehru plunged into the Home Rule Movement and became one of the secretaries of the Allahabad branch. A few months earlier, in December 1916, he had met Gandhi at the Lucknow Congress, but this meeting left no immediate effect. It is important to recall that in 1917 Gandhi was opposing and not supporting the Home Rule Movement. By the middle of 1918, Jawaharlal and his father both parted company with the Moderates and denounced the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms.

The emergence of Gandhi on the Indian political stage in the spring of 1919 did not therefore rouse Nehru's nationalism; it only provided a focus for it. After Jawaharlal decided to go the Gandhi way, his father did not take long to take the plunge. Things were never the same again for the Nehru family. But we must remember that in the early twenties the real partnership was between Gandhi and Motilal; Jawaharlal's position vis-a-vis Gandhi was only that of a young, earnest and devoted disciple. There was from the beginning an emotional bond between the two men

which transcended the political nexus and bridged the gulf of 20 years and differing intellectual backgrounds. It was during these early years that Jawaharlal acquired from the Mahatma a framework—an ethical framework—which was to have a profound influence on his political career.

Hardly less important than contact with Gandhi was the happy accident which brought young Jawaharlal face to face with the "naked, hungry mass" of India. In the summer of 1920, exiled by the British from Mussoorie, Jawaharlal accompanied a group of peasants from Pratapgarh district and tramped the dusty roads of Oudh countryside. "Looking at them and their misery and overflowing gratitude," he wrote many years later, "I was filled with shame at my own easygoing and comfortable life and our petty problems of the city." It was his first glimpse of rural India, and instructive in more ways than one. Not the least of its effects was to cure him of stage fright. In 1911, when he was studying for the bar in England, he had confided to his father that he could "imagine nothing more terrifying than having to speak in public." For nearly eight years, despite his passionate involvement in politics, he had found it difficult to address public meetings. But in the presence of these wide-eyed, unsophisticated and ignorant peasants he forgot his nervousness. That his Hindustani diction was not of the purest and that he fumbled for words did not seem to matter; the peasants' faces were strangely transfigured, their eyes glistened and their crushing load of misery was momentarily lifted as they listened to him.

From that moment politics ceased to be a drawing room affair for Nehru. The spectre of that "naked, hungry mass" never ceased to haunt him. He had long been a nationalist; now he became a democrat and a socialist. Political freedom was henceforth important to him mainly as a prelude to social and economic changes.

A fortunate combination of circumstances had helped to mould Jawaharlal Nehru. He had an extraordinary father: Motilal would have made his mark in any country at any time. Motilal's westernization was not a pale imitation of the West, but a revolt against the superstition, obscurantism and parochialism of his own people. National pride, rationalism and secularism for which youngmen of his generation had to struggle were part of Jawaharlal's heritage. The fact that he went to Harrow and Cambridge at an impressionable age did not alienate him from his country; indeed it lent a romantic touch to his nationalism. During those years, just before the First World War, he was exposed to the winds of change which were blowing in Europe. The doctrine of *laissez faire* was going by the board. A socialist government had taken office in Australia. Science and technology were transforming the life of the common man, and for the first time in human history, it seemed, poverty and degradation were not the inevitable lot for the majority of mankind. Irish nationalists, English suffragettes and Indian immigrants in South Africa, social democrats and revolutionaries in Russia were battling for their rights. Though Jawaharlal took his degree in the natural sciences, he had developed a

keen interest in literature, history, economics and politics. At Cambridge his reading ranged widely and discursively. On return to India, he did not have much time to keep up his intellectual pursuits but, luckily for him, the British gave him a helping hand. In 1922, he found himself a political prisoner. During the next 23 years, he was to serve ten spells in prison amounting to a total of nine years.

Unlike some politicians in India in similar circumstances, Nehru did not delve into the scriptures and write commentaries on them. Instead, he embarked on what was probably the most fruitful course of adult self-education a prisoner has ever undertaken. The process of self-education continued during the years 1926-27 when he was in Europe for the treatment of his wife and was able to snatch some time for reading, reflection and travel. His horizon widened; he began to see the problems of India in the world context. At the Brussels meeting of the Congress of Oppressed Nationalities in 1927, he spoke not only for India but for all Afro-Asian countries. Of his new-found broad perspective we get a glimpse in a letter he wrote to Gandhi in April 1927:

*It is not desirable nor indeed possible for India to plough a lonely furrow now or in the future... I am afraid we are terribly narrow in our outlook and the sooner we get rid of this narrowness, the better. Our salvation can of course come only from the internal strength that we may evolve, but one of the methods of evolving that strength should be study of other peoples and their ideas.*

This trend towards a world view, which his intellectual contact with the West had promoted, was further accelerated by the influence that Tagore exercised on Nehru. Tagore's appreciation of Western thought and values, at a time when Indian nationalism under the first impact of Gandhi had tended to be introspective and isolationist, proved a wholesome corrective. The international outlook that Jawaharlal developed in the 1920's received a further impetus during his spells of imprisonment. In the *Glimpses of World History*, we see his mind range across the centuries over the great figures and events of the past. He brooded on the web of politics, diplomacy and war and the endless trails of bitterness and bloodshed. He reflected on the unrealized possibilities and the incalculable hazards of science and technology. All this helped to give him a perspective both of the past and of the future, which stood him in good stead not only in the vicissitudes of the national struggle, but also in his long tenure as the first Prime Minister of independent India. This perspective became a major cause of misunderstandings between him and his critics in his country and outside; a politician who thinks in terms of decades instead of weeks and months runs the risk of being called an impractical idealist.

Nehru's view of the world was thus compounded of the robust rationalism and scepticism derived from currents of European thought in his youth; of Marxist and socialist thought of the 1920's and 1930's as interpreted

by Harold Laski and the Left Book Club; of Gandhi's ethical outlook and of Tagore's humanism. All these influences can be seen by the discriminating reader in Jawaharlal's major works: the *Glimpses of World History*, the *Autobiography* and the *Discovery of India*. Written in jail, these books bear testimony to his great gifts: a penetrating intellect, a tenacious memory, a vivid imagination and a facile pen. He loved literature and knew the delights of creative writing, but it is doubtful if he ever wanted to be a professional writer. When Lord Lothian, the British Liberal leader, confided to Sir Thomas Jones in 1936 that Jawaharlal Nehru had "probably given up action for philosophic meditation for the rest of his life," the wish might have been father to the thought, but not a few critics of Nehru have called him a starry-eyed idealist, a poet, a professor who had strayed into the political arena. Even some of his admirers have lamented that he gave to politics what was meant for literature. This is a complete misreading of the man and of his motives. Without his passionate commitment to politics it is doubtful if Jawaharlal would ever have become an author. Once he had cast in his lot with Gandhi, he felt an irresistible call to action. He travelled from one end of the country to the other, dividing his time between railway trains and public meetings, organizing, exhorting, admonishing, inspiring. He needed all this ceaseless activity to abate the fever in his brain; in jail this activity took the form of writing—writing about the struggle that raged outside. His books were personal as well as political testaments.

"The world is a hard place for the idealist," Nehru wrote in his *Glimpses of World History*. He had his share of disappointments and frustrations, but he had also known triumph and fulfilment. The transition from rebel to ruler, from nationalist agitator to world statesman, is not an easy one, but in the case of Jawaharlal Nehru it seemed effortless, almost natural. The citadels of foreign rule and feudalism in India, which seemed almost impregnable when he dared to challenge them in his youth, had fallen. Not only India, but Asia and Africa had emerged from the long night of political subjugation. The great adventure of modernizing Indian economy to which he summoned his countrymen had begun and the idea of marshalling national resources for planned economic growth had come to be widely accepted. In the fifties, when international politics had polarized and the menace of nuclear disaster mounted, India served as a bridge between the contending power blocs. Nehru's pleas for coexistence and co-operation stemmed not from expediency but from the hard-won faith of a lifetime. That faith found eloquent expression in the very first speech he delivered after assuming office as Prime Minister of independent India, on that historic night of 14 August 1947: "Peace has been said to be indivisible; so is freedom, so is prosperity now, so is disaster in this one world that can no longer be split into isolated fragments."

It is not given to any man to solve all problems for all time. Nehru himself claimed neither omniscience nor infallibility. "I believe," he wrote, "all of us are liable to error and I rebel against the notion that an



organization, an idea or a country can be infallible." He was, he said, no more than a "humble seeker after truth and as one who had continually struggled to find the way, not always with success, to fit action to the objectives and ideals." Future generations may differ in assessing particular policies of the Nehru era. They are however unlikely to question the soundness of his basic premises: his rejection of irrationalism, social obscurantism and fanaticism of all brands whether racial, religious or political; his respect for the freedom and dignity of the human personality; his belief in the democratic processes; his aversion to regimentation and violence; his insistence that even good ends do not justify bad means; and, finally, his conviction that in the atomic age the alternative to world co-operation is world disaster.



## Nehru : Man of Two Cultures and One World

### EAST AND WEST ?

Cardinal Valerian Gracias (India):

I drew great inspiration from the life and activity of Jawaharlal Nehru. As I have said, I have had the highest admiration for his personality and achievement, not that I believe that the purpose of this Round Table is just to praise him as we must but if there is anything on which there can be a division of opinion, that would also come within our purview. So, as I was saying, it is not because he was a paragon of perfection. As I have stated in my paper, there are only two types of men who do not make mistakes—God Almighty and the man who does nothing! Speaking of him as a man of two cultures, I think Nehru's greatness lies in effecting a very happy blend of his innate love for India with her civilization and culture, on the one hand, and all that scientific process that was coming on it were like an avalanche upon his country and his people, on the other. I feel we are running the risk during this discussion of perhaps forgetting the fundamental fact that, in the scheme of world affairs or in the design of divine providence, there is place for everything under the sun, that is, science, culture, philosophy, metaphysics and also religion.

Dr. S. Huzayyin (U.A.R.):

I should like to start by questioning the validity of the theme that any one man could be a man of two cultures. That may perhaps provide a very attractive title, but if we analytically look at things, it is next to impossible for any man to belong to two cultures. I have always looked upon Nehru as an Indian representing Indian culture and Indian attitude towards knowledge and culture in general. He appreciated the Western attitude. He could see the other point of view and appreciate and admire it, but he does not belong to it. It would be unfair to Nehru to consider him as of European culture. It is true that he appreciated European culture in general and in particular the culture of Western Europe with which he was imbued in childhood and during his student life. He also appreciated the human and social aspects of East European culture.

In the Middle East, in the Arab world, we appreciate Nehru, we see in him a man of real human culture. I think we are also used, in our part of the world, to look upon culture not only in its space relationship but also through the time scale, for culture differs from science or the scientific method in the fact that it extends in time. That is why we appreciate him. When we speak of Nehru in this context, we speak with admiration and understanding because we think that there is in him something in common with us both in space and in time.

**Mr. John Freeman (U.K.):**

I think we should be very careful not to interpret the two cultures too narrowly as East versus West. Dr. Maksond has touched this point. He helped us by saying "North versus South," [referring to the cultures of the developed, industrialized and highly technological societies of the North as against the cultures of the developing and underdeveloped societies of the South which were now emerging into the twentieth century] rather than "East versus West." Even there I think all geographical terms are perhaps dangerous. I would like to suggest that it is equally true to say Nehru represented the culture, the world if you like, of scientific humanism against the culture of magic, dogma and superstition. It is tempting, in view of Nehru's experience of Britain and the West, to interpret the two cultures on a geographical basis, but it is equally to the point to evaluate them qualitatively. Nehru lived, like all of us, whether we come from Asian culture, European culture or American culture, in two cultures—superstition and dogma on one side and scientific humanism on the other. He dedicated himself to the latter and he proclaimed that this could be the basis of one world.

**Prof. H. Nakamura (Japan):**

Jawaharlal Nehru has been referred to here very often as a man of two cultures, which means East and West. Like Ambassador Paz\*, I am rather sceptical about the dichotomy of East and West. What do you mean by East and what do you mean by West? The Near East, for example, is regarded as part of Asia by westerners, but for us Far-easterners it is like a part of Europe. Where does India come in? The westerners may call it East, but we Far-easterners would call it West. A big publisher in Japan in fact recently included India in the West in its dictionary of historical names. So East and West cannot be easily defined. I would like to say that the terms "East" and "West" which are often used should be interpreted as symbols representing different culture traditions. But we should not be restricted by this kind of dichotomy. Eastern civilization may be different from Western civilization, but behind the differences lies a sort of unity which should not be neglected. I think Nehruji had clearly this idea in mind and that is why he discussed world history as a total one. We should not overlook the existence of one humanity and of the human mind.

**Prof. Otto von Simson (Federal Republic of Germany):**

It seems to me that in the light of what previous speakers have said the definition of our theme no longer appears quite adequate. Ambassador Paz has suggested that instead of "two cultures," it would be better to speak of two "historical realities," as Jawaharlal Nehru called them. In this connexion, one thing that strikes me as extraordinary about Nehru

*Discovery of India*—and I admit that I owe my personal discovery of India to that book—is that here India is seen by an Indian whose education had made him familiar with another culture; and that this other culture—that of the West—remains constantly present. Is it not this that renders the *Discovery of India* so fresh and so exciting, even for the foreigner, to follow? It seems to me that Nehru's method of defining important aspects of Indian life and civilization is the method of distinction, of setting off and contrasting it with comparable aspects of Western civilization. This very approach of course implies an awareness of profound and essential differences. I imagine that Pandit Nehru would have been particularly sensitive to the difficulties that any attempt to interpret the two worlds to one another would encounter. I recall a passage from the writings of a contemporary German philosopher who speaks with despair of what he considers the inability of the West to understand Eastern philosophy, for the Western mind, so the argument runs, is so structured by the philosophy of Greece that whenever we seek to understand Indian philosophy our traditional ways of thinking are bound to distort it. Surely, this pessimism is exaggerated but there is a warning that is perfectly justified and ought to be borne in mind in any intellectual action aiming at a better mutual appreciation of Eastern and Western cultures. It was doubtless because Nehru was aware of this difficulty of the two worlds to communicate with one another that he blessed Unesco's East-West Major Project in New Delhi ten years ago.

## SCIENCE AND CULTURE

Mr. John Freeman (U.K.):

I have said earlier that Nehru aligned himself with the culture of science against the older culture of superstition. In fact, he realized with exceptional clarity that science and technology must be the basis for economic development and for the full liberation of the people in an underdeveloped country. I have in mind some quotations which throw light on different levels of his scientific interest. He saw science as contributing to the social and cultural emancipation of the masses of the people and as being, above all else, quite distinct from superstition, obscurantism and dogma. The passage in the *Discovery of India* where he made the latter and most significant statement is one of the most interesting reflections of Nehru's mind that I have been able to come across anywhere. Science was fundamental, I think, to his own outlook on life and its relation to the people of India.

Dr. Clovis Maksoud (League of Arab States):

Nehru was committed to science not only as a discipline but also as a style which meant precision, which meant systematic inquiry. He was

committed to science as a temper, because science made man acquire an aptitude to accommodate change and also contribute to change. At this critical juncture, science is a criterion of what is culture, because if the scientific dimension and the scientific approach are not considered inherent in culture, your commitment to principle collapses into dogma and obscurantism; and culture is a negation of obscurantism. It is vital with rational human beings of whom Nehru was one. He was so because science enabled him to be so. Therefore, he was a man of principle, but never a man of dogma. He was a man of patriotism, but he was not a man of chauvinism because to him the cultural reality of India was not a closed one.

**Dr. S. Huzayyin (U.A.R.):**

Nehru's greatness really lies in the fact that he broke the schism between science and culture, between mind, brain and reason, on the one hand, and the soul, the spirit and the conscience of man, on the other. He brought together the scientific attitude in man and scientific values in man with the cultural attitude and cultural values in man. He looked for technological development only as a means for social development of his country and of the world. He looked upon culture as a means to make science more cultured, more serviceable to his country and to humanity in general. For, science becomes a very dangerous instrument in the hands of an uncultured man.

## TWO CULTURES AND ONE WORLD

**Dr. Clovis Maksoud (League of Arab States):**

If we conceive of culture as training and understanding, the so-called "westerners" among us who have alienated themselves from the objective reality of their nations and societies cannot be called cultured. Nehru was a man of two cultures, was more than a cultured man inasmuch as he had the training and commitment to the scientific and humanist rationale and also had the understanding and, therefore, the identification. And the crisis, if I may say so, of the intelligentsia in many of the newly emergent countries of Asia and Africa has been the crisis of alienation. Their training and techniques, their exposure to a more refined culture or a more substantive culture, in terms of the twentieth century yardsticks, have alienated them and they come to their societies incapable of communication because they lack the involvement which leads to understanding and also the ability to communicate. Nehru was a man who achieved the techniques of modern evolved culture and was capable of communication both with his people and with the outside world. He was a man of one world because he had no alienation from man, but only from situations and this, I think, is the central

theme in understanding Nehru, the man of two cultures and one world. The situations to which he objected were mostly colonialism, imperialism and exploitation.

**M. Jean Daridau (France):**

I had the honour of meeting Pandit Nehru for one day but from that brief encounter I have kept precise memories of his spontaneous tendency to rise from the particular to the general and of his constant concern for the good of mankind. Nehru was well aware of the considerable problem raised by an old but static culture in the path of India's adjustment to the industrial age. But he knew, too, the contribution that the Indian people must bring to industrial civilization. He knew that his country had much to learn, but also much to teach. And he was determined to turn a desirable confrontation of cultures not only into national good, but into a common weal, if I may borrow the term used by my colleague, M. Abou-Richeh.\* In that respect as in others, Nehru has left a great lesson behind him.

**Shri P.N. Kirpal (India):**

I wish to pose the relationship of Nehru as citizen of one world to his love for history. Starting as a student of natural sciences, he became deeply attached to what one may call the historical outlook and approached his writing and thinking from that perspective. If he had been a historian, he would have written a very brilliant history of the world, of how man came to the situation he was in and where man was going to.

I being a very humble student of history, it seems to me that a historian must somehow—and this is perhaps true of poets, too—achieve the integration of the past and the present and the future. In Nehru's historical outlook and in his approach to history this element was constantly present. His view of the past was motivated by his involvement in the present and his vision of the future. His sense of continuity in all these three periods made him, I think, extraordinary—not as a historian because he had no time to write history, but as a person who had a deep feeling for history and understood well the meaning of history.

**Mr. Stephen Spender (U.K.):**

I was reading Nehru's *Autobiography* last week, and it does not seem to me that he is a very extraordinary man, with an extraordinary mind. He does have extraordinary qualities, the chief of which is courage—outstanding courage. Another outstanding quality of Nehru is that he was what you might call a creative man of action. He had a creative, speculative, rather

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\*See his paper, p. 17.

poetic kind of mind, and you might first think that this man ought really to have been a writer. He was however so much involved in the affairs of his country and the particular historic situations in which he found himself that these became the channels through which he realized himself and expressed his personality and created something. He made use of that material of history in which he found himself.

**Prof. B.G. Gafurov (U.S.S.R.):**

It is proper here to stress once more the approach of Jawaharlal Nehru to the problems of culture which was not that of a national narrow meaning of this word. His was the approach of a man who loved sincerely the cultural heritage of his own people and of his own country but at the same time was able to appreciate the cultural achievements—and the state activities—of other peoples. He always kept in great esteem the achievements of the people of the Socialist countries based on the principles of Marxism, to which Nehru always referred with respect.

**Cardinal Valerian Gracias (India):**

A question has been raised about the definition of culture. Well, in my early studies as a student of philosophy and humanities, I read many treatises on civilization and culture, but actually I have not come across any precise definition of culture. I am sure all of us know what it is but we are not in a position, as you see from the divergent views expressed here, to define precisely what culture is. But, then, why not take inspiration from Nehru himself? He would absorb the best that is available wherever it is found. The truth is, Nehru was merged and submerged in affairs of state so that he had not the time and the leisure to clarify or elaborate his ideas. That is my humble opinion. Several of his utterances, particularly his incidental remarks and observations, are loud thinking. We, who are the admirers of this stalwart, might perhaps unconsciously succumb to the temptation of reading in them more than they warrant. For example, it is often said, even in the course of the discussion here, that Nehru was not wedded to dogma and religion. And yet, as he went on in life, in the evening of his life, he did apply his mind, not in a scientific manner, to spiritual realities.

## EDUCATION FOR ONE WORLD

**Shri P.N. Kirpal (India):**

I often ask myself the question: how do we educate the man of one world? If there is going to be one world, as it seems to me there must be, we must think of some kind of education for the citizen of one world. Looking at Nehru's life it seems to me that here was truly a man of one world who



belonged to two cultures, and it seems to me that if an educationist has to ponder over the content of education for producing citizens of tomorrow, we should reflect in our educational system the deep awareness of two cultures in man. I hold the view, and this is the question I wish to pose to this group, that to be truly a citizen of one world one must belong to his roots and also belong as deeply as possible to something else outside one's roots. If you can achieve that, you are nearer world citizenship than anything else that can bring you to that condition. It is a question of basing the content of education on two cultures in terms of values, not merely fragments of encounters from here and there. How does in fact one educate the citizen of the one world of tomorrow?

**Mr. Stephen Spender (U.K.):**

All that I would like to do is really to question the question and leave it there. Behind what Mr. Kirpal is saying there may not exactly be an assumption, but he is suggesting that it is possible to educate people to be Nehrus, and I must say that I doubt whether this is possible. The extraordinary thing about Nehru is that although he was very much an Indian, very much part of his culture, he did not feel it necessary just to be an Indian or just belong to that culture and tradition in which he was brought up. I would like to say that this is a very rare phenomenon. I have met few people who have this quality; one is the Nigerian poet, Wole Soyinka. What was natural to Nehru and what is natural to Soyinka—both to be part of their natural culture and quite outside it—would be a kind of schizophrenia for most people. I am just trying to press the question further, and to ask whether you can educate the people to be like Nehru and Soyinka.

**Cardinal Valerian Gracias (India):**

Is it possible in our sphere of education to educate the youth to be citizens of the world, to be people of culture in the way Nehru was a man of two cultures? Nehru was certainly unique, but to imply that he is not a subject for imitation in this respect would be to acknowledge our intellectual and cultural bankruptcy. What is the practical way in our schools, in our colleges, in our cultural societies, where we could train our youth on the pattern presented to us by Jawaharlal Nehru? I have been associated, for the last 40 years of my priestly ministry, with the youth of India. There are a large number among them who have been bitten by the bug of Western civilization and who have not much use for what we call Eastern culture or Eastern civilization; there are others who are neither fish nor flesh, but there is an increasing number that is following this process of absorbing the various elements in whatever culture of the world they may be found. To illustrate, there is a movement in India to follow the pattern set by Jawaharlal Nehru in the spheres of prose and poetry, arts and architecture.

During the famous International Eucharistic Congress held in Bombay we happily blended the East and the West in our cultural functions.

**Dr. S. Huzayyin (U.A.R.):**

What is good citizenship? What is being a good citizen of one's own country and a good citizen of the world? This question has been raised by our friend, Mr. Kirpal, as an educationist. I think Nehru gave us a lesson in this respect which educationists should take into account in building up philosophies of education. If they did so they would perform great service to humanity.

Nehru did not feel at all that he would sacrifice his country's interests if he led the thought of his nation towards the humanistic attitude. There was no fear. He was not afraid of anything in spite of the fact that actually when he started his idea about one world, India was in a very bad crisis, in a phase where it had been emerging from long foreign domination, from division within India, from many hardships. Yet, this did not force Nehru within the narrow boundaries of nationalism which might or could have alienated one's thought from any idea of a world community. It is up to educationists, especially in the East, to make their contribution towards a correction of the idea of what is national. They must teach that in order to become a good citizen of your own country, you have to become a good citizen of the world community and that only a good citizen of his own country can become a good internationalist, a good citizen of the world. This ideal is worthy of our consideration at this conference because it sheds more light upon the great thoughts of a man who was a master, a teacher in the historical sense of the word.

### NEHRU AS A PHILOSOPHER

**Prof. H. Nakamura (Japan):**

The greatness of Nehruji as a statesman is well known, but I would like to point out that he was a great philosopher at the same time. He was not a university professor of philosophy. I do not know whether he taught in any university or not. But his illuminating works are evidence that he was a great thinker and a philosopher in the true sense of the word. His valuable works such as the *Discovery of India* and *Glimpses of World History* give us a great deal of deep insight into the development of world civilization. He was indeed a philosopher of history. His works present the entire perspective of the development of human thought. I think he believed in humanity as one.

**Shri V.K. Krishna Menon (India):**

Nehru never claimed to be a philosopher. I know the best part of him. It is probably not correct to say that he was a philosopher. This is not to

say that he had no fixed views because these things were not meant as fixed ideas, they were meant in the context of active political life to deal with a particular problem. What he said must be taken in the context. One should not attempt or try to build it into a pattern and then take it as a minor premise or a major premise to say that he was a philosopher. He acted in certain circumstances in certain ways and it is up to the historian, up to the student to find from this the connexion. When you say a person is not a philosopher you are only saying that he was not like one of the law-givers. From that it should not be interpreted to mean that he was a person without ordered ideas or a schematic way of thinking.

**Prof. Otto von Simson (Federal Republic of Germany):**

I was relieved to hear Mr. Krishna Menon tell us that Pandit Nehru was not a philosopher and that one should not try to analyse Nehru's thoughts as a system of philosophy. His thoughts were those of a statesman and of a politician. He was concerned with the advance, improvement and progress of his country, and for that very reason he stated forcefully the essentials such as he saw them and such as we see them, thanks to him.

**Shrimati Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit (India):**

Men pass on but ideas remain and, as we have seen, many of my brother's ideas have given food for thought and inspired people far beyond the borders of India. There can be no finer tribute to any man than the recognition that his ideas have soared beyond the national boundaries and have become intertwined in the daily life and thought of people everywhere.

There were some words which my brother was very fond of using, some sentences which he often repeated, particularly when talking about peace. He liked to say that only when men became passionately involved with an idea could they really move towards its fulfilment. It is because of his own basic commitment to Man that he could involve himself passionately in all things concerning the welfare of men and worked with unceasing effort to the very end of his life. His purpose was to reduce to unity and harmony all conflict and disparity wherever they existed. This is the image he left behind. This also is the challenge posed to the world today. I hope the discussions on other aspects of Nehru's life will take place from time to time here and elsewhere and through them will emerge a clearer image of the man, his thoughts and words, and particularly of the spirit behind them.

## Nehru: National Independence and International Peace

GANDHI AND NEHRU

**Shri Romesh Thapar (India):**

I believe that Jawaharlal Nehru, after he returned from England, was going through an inner struggle and that the impact of Mahatma Gandhi at this point is most relevant to our understanding of Nehru. It was only because of the presence of Mahatma Gandhi and the deep communion that developed between Nehru and Gandhi that Nehru was able to become a man of action. Gandhi learnt from him, too. They had many differences; they had different views of history and yet they learnt from each other. I think in discussing Nehru, we should not ignore this massive influence in his life, because it conditioned his political activity; it conditioned much, I think, of his later attitudes to the world. And similarly there was Gandhi's own development under Nehru's great humanizing attitude to world peace. We see that in the debates which took place in the Indian National Congress, Nehru saw India through Gandhi's eyes and Gandhi saw the world through Nehru's eyes.

**Dr. Clovis Maksoud (League of Arab States):**

With due respect to those Indians who know more about Nehru than I do, I do not think Nehru's link with India was Gandhi. There is no doubt that Gandhi apprised Nehru of certain facets of India at an early stage of Nehru's communion with India, which expedited his knowledge of the ferment of India. That is one thing. But to say he was Nehru's living link, instead of saying he was one of the living links with India, is I think a little unfair to Nehru's Indianness. Although the Indianness of Nehru is not easily seen or observed at that time, yet Indianness does not necessarily by implication associate with it a certain conservatism of approach. I do not agree with many who have tried to challenge the beginning of Nehru's Indianness. I think there is a great deal of overestimating the impact and the influence of the West.

**Shri M. Chalapathi Rau (India):**

I would only submit that a correct enunciation as to the relationship between Gandhi and Nehru is still to be defined very carefully. That has to be done with a historical mind. It would be hazardous to come to any simplification of the relationship between them. We cannot allocate to them any responsibility as a kind of sharing of portfolios among members of the Cabinet. There is need to have a correct perspective about Nehru. There is an equal need for a correct perspective about Gandhi. When

we are discussing or assessing the consequences of Jawaharlal Nehru's policies, we have also to assess the consequences of Gandhi's. There is a sort of intermingling of both.

**Shri V. K. Krishna Menon (India):**

I think it is no reflection on Panditji to say that so long as Gandhiji lived, or perhaps till about a year afterwards, he reigned and he was India. There was no question of Panditji or anybody else deviating from that. Everybody came under that umbrella. Both before Independence and afterwards, in smaller or larger groups, he always referred to Gandhiji as the 'Master'. In his talks with some of us he always said: "We will go back to what Gandhiji would have done." So there is no question of trying to find a formula or some sort of equation on the problem that has been posed here with regard to Gandhi and Nehru. It is quite true that Nehru did not surrender his judgment at any time. He exercised his free, independent judgment on every problem, but when it came to taking a final decision there used to be some sort of synthesis or reconciliation. But that is practical politics. It is rather a mistake to fall into the fallacy, adopted by some foreign writers: "Here are two schools of thought; the two schools are irreconcilable; so let us split them out." That was not the position so far as India was concerned.

**Prince Prem Purachatra (Thailand):**

I should like to draw attention to the fact that the monumental work of Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru had a great influence on the freedom movement in Southeast Asia and also, I believe, elsewhere. This came really in two big waves, both before and after the Second World War. The younger generation, who were growing up before the Second World War, were inspired by the news coming from India on what was going on there—the titanic struggle for independence—and again after the War when the movement gained an impetus as a result of certain changes brought about by the War. Nehru's work went far beyond the confines of his own country and even probably beyond Asia struggling to be free. Even in my own country which won its freedom 700 years ago, we felt his stirring and inspiring call for independence. Among our young people, it enjoyed very great support and it had a great influence on the people in our own country.

## INDEPENDENCE AND PARTITION

**Mr. John Freeman (U.K.):**

Mr. Thapar\* raised a question, and did not answer it, about the divergence of view which arose between Jawaharlal Nehru and Gandhi on patience vs. action in the later stages of the freedom struggle. Would further patience

\* See his paper, p. 26.

on Gandhian lines have "forced Britain to hand over to a united centre?" Now it struck me that it might be of interest if I were to put on record what, I believe, would be a general British view of this, looking back after nearly a quarter of a century with detachment and with all passion spent.

I think the consensus of British opinion, as historians are beginning to evaluate this period of history, would be that after the Second World War, patience would no longer have been adequate to produce the result Gandhi desired. We should say that unity might have been preserved if the offer of the Cabinet Mission in 1942 had been acceptable. In 1942, I think, it would seem to many of us that the possibility of handing over to a united centre, whether we had been compelled to or whether we had done so voluntarily, still existed. Once the opportunity of 1942 had passed, then I think the British view would perhaps be that unity was no longer possible and that Jawaharlal Nehru's insistence on action, accepting the existing position and the partition with it, was as good as any other course and probably better. I think our view today, 20 or 25 years later, would be that Nehru's view was probably a more correct one from India's point of view than Gandhi's. It is regarded in my country as one of the most remarkable developments of history that, after this long and occasionally bloody freedom struggle, not only did our two countries devise relations which were healthy and cordial and mutually profitable, but also that Nehru himself was loved by liberal opinion in Britain only less than he was by the masses in his own country. This is really a very remarkable historical development.

**Shri Romesh Thapar (India):**

I would like to take up this interesting point which I left unanswered in my paper. It was just a tentative frame. I agree with Mr. Freeman that 1942—it is my personal judgment—was the watershed, as it were. The moment we lost the opportunity, historically speaking, in 1942, we saw two parallel developments—one was the gradual erosion of our own control over the freedom movement and a very conscious British effort to build the Muslim League and a very conscious response on the part of the Muslim League. So, by 1947, the situation was out of our hands and there I would agree with Mr. Freeman that we in India, at least quite a large number of people I know of, feel the same way.

**Shri M. Chalapathi Rau (India):**

If we are allowed to go into the realm of history, each one of us is free to interpret the facts as one likes or to remember certain facts and forget others. For instance, there has been a reference to 1942. What exactly happened in 1942? There were the Cripps proposals; it was not the moment of freedom. Freedom came in 1947. In 1942, the Congress, guided by Jawaharlal Nehru, who at that moment was interested in fighting not only

the British in India but also Fascism in Europe, came to one conclusion. Nehru was very keen that a free India should be able to take a share in the fight against aggression in the world. But, in 1942, it was very difficult for the British to concede the defence portfolio to Indian hands. At that time, the talks broke down and a very good opportunity was lost. Then came the growth of the Muslim League. During seven years of Lord Linlithgow, Viceroy of India, the Muslim League grew from a small communal party into a party which was supposed to be on par with the Congress. So the problem developed. If one had the time, one could go into the "ifs" of history. If the British had not come to this country, what would have happened? I would like to ask if the British had granted dominion status in 1920, what would have happened? If the British had conceded dominion status even in 1930, what would have happened? What would have happened if there was no partition in 1947?

Jawaharlal Nehru did not favour partition. However, the situation was difficult. There was the need to build the country. The Congress Working Committee had passed a resolution that there was no good in forcing the unwilling parts of the country to join a united India. The Cabinet Mission came. It was only a question whether Pakistan would be outside the country or inside the country. The Cabinet Mission's scheme was such that it was full of checks and balances, it was so complex, that neither part of India could have been free to go ahead to build its future as it liked. So, ultimately, it was conceded that those who were unwilling should not be forced to join the Indian Union and be left separate. Nehru did not like partition; he never accepted partition as a solution. In his *Discovery of India*, he had written that partition would solve no problem.

**Shri V. K. Krishna Menon (India):**

Now, first of all, let it be said that partition was a risk that was taken. It is a price that we paid for independence. And there is no getting away from the fact that the Indian people were prepared to pay any price to get rid of the British. That is the position. It is wrong to say that partition has been justified by subsequent events. We thought at that time, when we submitted to the operation, that the two remaining pieces would be healthy. Our expectations were not fulfilled. That is current politics into which I am not going.

There is no doubt that the British since 1946, when the Cabinet Mission came, rather regarded partition as briukmanship. They thought they could postpone the grant of independence by this device. So they said: "We are prepared to give it, but to whom could we give it?" They said that it was the real question facing them. All the steps necessary for partition had been thought of and developed by Britain over a long period. It should not be forgotten that the idea of giving independence to India came rather suddenly when Mountbatten was sent to India and the British fixed a time limit. They had come to a situation when they could no longer

hold India partly because of economic, political and other impacts after World War II and partly because of the tremendous amount of vitality released during the struggles of non-co-operation and particularly since the 1942 movement. I personally believe that it was not any particular incident in the West that changed it one way or the other.

## NON-ALIGNMENT AND THIRD FORCE

**Dr. Clovis Maksoud (League of Arab States):**

Now what did non-alignment mean to Nehru? This has to be understood in the context of the world that independent India faced. It was a world bifurcated into two postures, into two antagonistic blocs, each claiming to have the total possession of complete truth and the other being denounced as utterly wrong. This was an unhealthy polarization that led to areas of tension. In this situation, he found that India could not accept the formula of communism as it emanated during the Stalinist regime. He also realized that considering the nature of economic hierarchy that obtained in the West, with its background of colonial domination and exploitation, the role of Asia and Africa was to extricate themselves from this bipolar world. Non-alignment was an international projection of his internal quest for an Indian system that would lead to a good society within India, a concept blending the revolutionary zest of socialism with the humanist content of liberalism. His non-alignment was in fact a conscious alignment on the part of India to certain forces that were in his view latent within both policies and that is why he shied away from the formation of a third bloc.

Nehru wanted through non-alignment to discover the unifying forces in the world community, and I think to a large extent the success of non-alignment, which was pioneered by Nehru, has led today to a liberalization of and accommodation between the forces of communism and anti-communism.

**Shri Romesh Thapar (India):**

Non-alignment was a natural product of the thought of Nehru. He saw the need to build not only a democratic society or a balance of democratic power within the country; he had also to introduce within his society an egalitarian economic system. When he looked around the world, he saw it polarized between two blocs heavily committed to mutual confrontation, one bloc certainly carrying a great tradition of democratic thought based upon assent, and another bloc emphasizing in the most humanistic manner, when you reduce it to its essentials, the need for an egalitarian system in economic structure. To align with either of the blocs would have involved damage to one or the other concept. I think non-



alignment for Nehru was a very integral projection of the internal consensus in the sense that he was fusing the great economic experimentation of the Socialist world with the great democratic humanistic traditions of the developed societies in the West. And this, I think, is how we should approach his internal posture with regard to the Indian reality, and his external posture with regard to the very sharp polarization that existed in the early years of India's freedom.

**Dr. S. Huzayyin (U.A.R.):**

I find that the two main elements of Nehru's non-alignment are courage and justice. Moral courage is a very important element. I think for a man like Nehru to stand up and say that "we are going to be non-aligned in spite of any consequences"—India was not very strong from a material point of view and had so many preoccupations—shows that he had the courage to follow non-alignment and to take any risks attached to it. This is a very important lesson in moral courage which really distinguishes a man. The other point is the idea of justice. Justice emanates from the conscience of man, and it is his conscience that distinguishes him from the rest of creation. This world could of course be run by reason, rational actions, if people were reasonable enough. But reason is not enough for man to live his full life. Nations as well as individuals live, I think, by upholding the two ideals of moral courage and justice as emanating from the conscience of humanity, of Man. It is mainly in these two fields that Nehru made his great and everlasting historical contribution.

**Shri P. N. Kirpal (India):**

In regard to non-alignment, it was not merely the interest of India which was uppermost in Nehru's mind. It was also a question of ethical principle, a question of faith and courage. He was not non-aligned with the two blocs *in toto*. He was non-aligned with certain excessive things arising out of fear and mistrust in the policies of the two blocs. I think he would never reject both the systems completely. His concept of non-alignment was not any kind of moral judgment or disapproval of the two blocs. His objective was to aim at some kind of synthesis or *rapprochement*. He thought India with her policy of non-alignment, possibly supported by many other countries, could reach this very positive, very ethical objective.

**M. Jean Daridan (France):**

Nehru worked throughout his life for peace and development of friendship between nations. His liberalism was always evident in dealing with countries and problems, and whenever he was advising any country to do a particular thing he was very prudent.

Here I would like to recall the contribution Nehru made to the cause of

peace. The two problems which affected us vitally were Algeria and Indochina. We know only too well the very useful role played by the Indian delegate at the Geneva Conference. Yet, Nehru took great care to avoid any initiative that might affect the susceptibilities of the parties, and that was very evident when India was charged with the Chairmanship of the International Commissions which were responsible for ensuring the implementation of the Geneva Agreement. The work that India began, we hope, will be taken up with fresh vigour.

In the case of Algeria, although he did not take a direct part in the solution of the problem, Nehru appreciated the desire of General de Gaulle to carry through the policy of self-determination. May I conclude by recalling a problem—a purely Indo-French one—the problem of the former French colonies which were transferred to India *de facto*? It was pending with the French Parliament for a considerable time. Despite the impatience and pressure brought to bear on him by his colleagues and others, never did Pandit Nehru allow this to become a matter of discord between the two countries. Now the ex-French colonies have become *de jure* part of India.

**Shri S. L. Poplai (India):**

Pandit Nehru typified or embodied certain values, both intellectual and moral values, and one of these values which characterized his behaviour both at home and abroad is that of a healthy sceptic, a person who would not take his decision from somebody else's conclusions, a person who did not believe that any one group or nation or ideology had the monopoly of truth. He made that quite clear in his speeches, and once declared that there were many millions in the world who were not committed to either capitalism or communism and yet sought a better life and a more hopeful future. That was the attitude that worked in his policies at home; that was also the attitude that worked in his policies abroad. That was also the attitude that appealed, in my opinion, to a large number of nations who won freedom from colonial rule since the end of World War II. If anything, Pandit Nehru was an activist. He was not a person who would rest content with the disabilities of his own or of his people. He always wanted to make a positive contribution to the problems of the world, and this was natural to a man who had dedicated himself and his country to the service of humanity. Nehru could not of course use power as a means to make his policy or his country's voice felt in international relations. If he did not have the power to match against the power of the U.S. or the U.S.S.R. or even Great Britain, the only thing he could do was to take an independent stance and offer his good offices in composing disputes with appeals to reason on both sides. He would thus try to bring down the tensions that were growing in the world.

I think it was this aspect of non-alignment which really appealed to the countries that had recently become independent. They were small powers, and did not have much of military strength, diplomatic experience

or economic power. And yet, with the exuberance of newly won freedom, they wanted to contribute their mite, whatever it was, towards resolving the very grave and difficult problems in the world. They would not allow the affairs of the world to be decided, as in the past, by the Great Powers. This was a major consideration which made the non-alignment policy attractive to the new small countries emerging into independence.

**Shri V.K. Krishna Menon (India):**

I do not think Panditji liked the word "non-alignment." What is "non-something," he would ask. Our position after we attained independence was that there was no question of going back to our old imperial masters; nor was there any question of our being able to attain some form of equality in relation to the two blocs. Our interest was to be able to consolidate our own development and not to be thrown into one of these blocs. They are two sides of the cold war. Panditji once said that we were not neutrals where human freedom and colonialism were concerned. Non-alignment certainly means that we will not be involved in the war blocs and that we will not be precommitted to the policy of any side. This refusal to divide the world, or to allow the world to be divided between the two sides, has made a confrontation between them, as has been said now, perhaps less of a danger than would have been the case otherwise. But the function of the non-aligned group of powers was not to form a third bloc or third force. I think it is not a question of playing with words because the whole idea of neutralism or non-alignment is the opposition to power blocs as such. Panditji made this quite clear while rejecting President Eisenhower's offer of arms aid to India to balance the U.S. military supplies to Pakistan, as it was a projection of the cold war apparatus in our part of the world. If there was to be a third bloc, which was effective in the military sense, it would have to be at least  $1\frac{1}{2}$  times stronger than either bloc. That would be too much power to be entrusted to anybody.

**Mr. Stephen Spender (U.K.):**

I would like to revive the idea of a "third force," which Mr. Menon has well nigh demolished. For although Mr. Nehru may have objected to this term—and it was indeed objectionable to many people—the fact remains that the policy of non-alignment was interpreted by many people outside India—and perhaps by some inside—as the idea of a third force. Perhaps third force is a wrong term. I do not want to quarrel about the terms employed, but it is a name for something positive and dynamic and not just pacific. Mr. Menon discussed the idea of a "third bloc," but for him to say that it would be a reality only if it had one and a half times the weapon power of the other blocs distorts the situation. The third force suggests the possibility of a situation in which the two power blocs with their comparatively small manpower confront the sheer mass of populations

in the rest of the world against whom they are not able to use their most effective (nuclear) weapons. The vastness of the population itself becomes a power, a third force indeed one and a half times stronger than the two blocs, measured in the size of their populations. It might be true to say that the Vietnamese war demonstrates the potentiality of the third force idea. The Americans cannot use their nuclear weapons, and their manpower, although steadily increasing, would have to measure itself against the manpower of a large part of Southeast Asia. Here population becomes a reality as a power without having nuclear power. I think something like this is really meant by the idea of the third force. I would not like this idea to be completely lost.

Shri V.K. Krishna Menon (India):

I am sorry I stand unrepentant about the third force. Third force means third force. It is well known that one of the justifications of atomic armament is atomic deterrence—if two atomic powers have enough armament there would not be any war so long as they are afraid of each other. I do not like to be gloomy or pessimistic, but we have not come to the end of the Vietnam business. We first saw 5000 troops; today we see half a million troops. It is quite true that we have not seen atomic weapons, but we saw them used in Hiroshima when Japan actually faced defeat. Only last week there were expressions of opinion in America that a limited amount of atomic bombing would bring the Vietnam war to an end. What is the guarantee against the use of atomic weapons?

Panditji himself referred to the non-aligned group of countries as roughly the area of peace, not meaning territorial area, but as a factor of peace in the sense that the voice of millions of people in the world was also a deterrent to war, although in a different sense. We opposed SEATO not because we thought that it would wage a war against us, but because we thought it was the projection of war apparatus in this part of the world. As against that, we have to place on record that the idea of neutralized zones in the world, which at various times emerged from the Polish Foreign Minister or from Anthony Eden or from African and Asian countries, has been totally disregarded by those who have nuclear power. There is only one thing you can do with atomic weapons and that is to end them. I personally believe that this idea of complete disarmament is not Utopia; the other thing—limitation of armament—is Utopia. If we have the power when we have a quarrel with our neighbour, we use it. If a gun is not sufficient, we want to make other guns. There is no answer to it. The only way is complete and total disarmament and that too as soon as possible. That is why when the U.S.S.R. brought this up in 1959, we were the first people to say that it is not Utopia.

## Nehru : Social Justice and National Development

### EQUALITY AND DEMOCRACY

Mrs. Alva Myrdal (Sweden):

In regard to social justice, Nehru was much more radical than Gandhi in demanding equality. He more than anybody before him thought in terms of precise legislation to achieve social equality and reform social institutions. Here we see how Nehru was an interventionist, much more than Gandhiji ever was. I believe that their structure of mind was different and that Nehru brought something new and important to India just because he was apt to think in interventionist terms. He was so much of an interventionist that he became the great protagonist of planning in India. And as a protagonist of democratic planning, which he was, we may even say that he was a world pioneer. It should not be forgotten that he planned for planning even before Independence. Nehru had already inherited radical and rebellious ideas from India and he thereafter blended them with rather more interventionist ideas from the West. He carried the synthesis to a workable political programme much farther than what any of his teachers had envisaged.

Dr. Clovis Maksoud (League of Arab States):

I would like to state very briefly that the basic commitment of Nehru was his egalitarianism. That was his principal motivating force and objective. Indian nationalism under Nehru's leadership, believing as it did in a new equal India, helped in freeing Britain from a status of superiority. This commitment to equality translated itself in the aftermath of independence, when India had become equal to other nations, to the politics within India. Equality of nations now became the equality of the individual within the nation. It is this double conception of equality that also provided secularism not as an accommodation between a majority and a minority because to Nehru, I think, there was no such thing as majority and minority. Secularism was for Nehru the projection of the central position of the individual in society and his needed equality.

Shri V. K. Krishna Menon (India):

For Panditji, the content of liberty was equality. And from that there has been no deviation, so far as he is concerned, or this country is concerned, except perhaps for the last few years when vested interests have questioned the proposition that the content of liberty is equality. That has been his contribution, which was projected in the Indian struggle for independence,

and if there is anything Panditji can be spoken of as an embodiment, it is this, that there is no liberty without equality. That also accounts for the fact that while there might have been arguments as to how to get independence there was no doubt as to who should have it. There has been no argument whether the untouchables should have the right to vote or the rich or the poor should have the right to vote. At the same time, he said that if there is universal adult franchise, it is necessary to have polling booths for every 1000 people. You might ask, what is the significance of it? He wanted to approach in practical terms the right given by independence. Freedom given in the Constitution has no meaning unless it is available to the people; that is to say, everybody has got the vote but if there is a polling booth just for 100,000 or 200,000 people then only those who have conveyance can go there. The equality that is conferred by the Constitution would not become real unless one is capable of exercising his franchise.

**Shri Sham Lal (India):**

Much has been said here regarding Pandit Nehru's ideas about social justice. We all know that he was a genuine democrat and that he wanted inequalities, both in terms of opportunities and living standards, to grow less and less. But the pertinent question is for us to assess how far the policies of the last 20 years have taken the country towards the goal of social justice set by him. In one field, that of educational opportunities, one can say at once that equality of opportunity has grown rapidly. I do not think the same can be said in regard to living standards. The period of planned development has in fact seen the growth of a large elite class which is today enjoying a standard of living that is in no way inferior to what it would expect in the most advanced industrial societies.

**Dr. Clovis Maksoud (League of Arab States):**

Nehru intellectually was undoubtedly a Socialist. To him democracy and socialism were not two separate categories. Democracy is an expression of socialism. Socialism is the application of democracy to the social and economic means of the large majority of the people. Therefore, in his speeches and talks, many times he emphasized the fact that there is no such thing as political democracy independent of economic and social democracy. He believed that economic and social democracy meant inevitably a certain measure of socialism.

**Shri V.K. Krishna Menon (India):**

Panditji, from the very early times, emphasized that democracy is meaningful only if it is not compartmental; that is to say, democracy must apply to the whole of society, to the whole of life, to the whole of mental attitudes. So unless democracy is applied to social, cultural and spiritual spheres, it is not complete; that is to say, if equality of opportunity for development, which is the idea of democracy, is denied in the economic sphere, which it

what affects a person most, there cannot be any democracy. So these ideas of democracy and socialism are intertwined and it is, I think, rather a futile exercise to consider which came first and which came afterwards.

Shri Romesh Thapar (India):

I think in the last years of Panditji's life, he was obsessed with the idea of moving the people. He always emphasized that they were India's greatest worth. He had moved them politically, how to move them into economic tasks? This is a problem in democracy. We must be very clear, I feel, in our discussion of these crucial issues. This central question of moving our people through persuasion, the greatest work in democracy, was, I think, the real problem that faced him before he died.

### EDUCATION AND LITERACY

Mrs. Alva Myrdal (Sweden):

I have definitely concluded that for the sake of democracy and popular participation in public affairs, for the establishment of a true two-way communication between the governors and the governed, and also not least for the sake of promoting economic development, the effective way is to assure as soon as possible 100 per cent literacy. If that goal cannot be reached quickly by way of primary schools, then it must be done, even if less perfectly, by way of adult literacy campaigns followed by circulation of reading materials.

I think we are not sufficiently aware of the great risk involved in just introducing more facilities of higher education when a population is not saturated with basic primary education and literacy. That would only lead to increasing the inequalities and preserving the idea of education as a class privilege. Even in regard to primary education, as long as you do not cover 100 per cent of the children, perhaps only 50 or 75 per cent of the school-age population, what education is provided will flow to the haves rather than to the have-nots. Primary education must permeate a whole nation without leaving any but the very odd children out. Otherwise, the differences will persist between one class more privileged because it is "educated" and the other kept backward to continue to be "the working class."

Shri Romesh Thapar (India):

When Mrs. Myrdal speaks of education, I accept the broad thesis that you cannot have an equal society with equal opportunity without cent per cent literacy. We must also realize that under Panditji, who was a great believer in this central principle, the experience in India has been to entrench the more affluent sections of the country through a formal type of education.

Therefore, I would like to amend Mrs. Myrdal's remarks to this extent—cent per cent literacy with an objective which is social. This involves work and technical skills. In India vast sums of money are put into education but we find that the education does not have this modern forward thrust, but creates entrenched privileges.

**Mr. M. Elmandjra (Unesco):**

I agree with Mrs. Myrdal that literacy is absolutely indispensable to economic development, especially if you want that economic development should not be accompanied by social injustice. The Director-General of Unesco, when he speaks on literacy, always makes the point that humanity today is operating at less than 50 per cent or even at 40 per cent. Since you have so many illiterates in the world, they are not effectively participating either in the development process or in the social and economic gains of what is happening.

However, investment in higher education and in technical education is also necessary for economic development because it provides trained manpower. It is only when you approach education from that angle, that is in terms of the need for and in terms of the productivity of trained engineers and graduates, that you can convince the Finance Ministers of the importance of putting more money into education. There is a big dilemma on this point, between the demands of economic development and social justice, so far as the role of education is concerned.

**Shri V.K. Krishna Menon (India):**

A reference has been made to education. The requirement of universal literacy was recognized a very long time ago, but Panditji's individual contribution towards that, except as Head of the Government, has been minimum because in this country education is a subject for the states from the organizational point of view and there are various other factors and I need not go into them. I am myself rather a disappointed person in regard to this. While it is quite true that 65 million children will be through schools this year and government spends more money in one year on education than what was spent in 50 years under British rule, it also remains a fact—Mr. Kirpal can correct me if I am wrong—that more than half of them are withdrawn from the school after the first, second or third year, as the case may be, to help the family or enter the labour market. So, the net result of education has to be decided by the vast volume of wastage that is taking place.

There is also considerable advance in university education, but the latest contribution, the latest encouragement or emphasis that was put by Panditji in regard to education is in regard to technological education. However, we have got to go a long way towards making this an educated country. Unless illiteracy is removed, it is very difficult for us to make a speedier march either into the fulfilment of our democratic ideas or in the removal of discrimination that arises. In a social sense, it is a mark of inferiority.



and literacy, therefore, is a necessary ingredient in the promotion of democracy.

**Prof. H. Nakamura (Japan):**

Mrs. Myrdal's paper is fascinating and convincing. I am just going to mention one case—a case from my country where spread of literacy and rise of productivity went hand in hand together. As you know, a hundred years ago when the westerners came to Japan, our leaders decided to open the country to the world—and did various things among which I might mention two points in particular. One was the abolition of illiteracy through compulsory education. The other was the abolition of the feudal system based on four classes. Everybody came to be treated equally, though there was one failure. Another kind of aristocracy created itself, but the last war changed that, too. We have since tried to introduce the principle of equality much more forcefully and I think it has been a success. For our economic recovery, spread of literacy has been very helpful. Of course, literacy alone is not enough; Mrs. Myrdal has emphasized this point. Some other elements are needed—in our case, hard work on the part of our people and aid and sympathy from foreign governments also helped.

**Shri P.N. Kirpal (India):**

Jawaharlal Nehru did not consider literacy as education. Once he said that he knew a number of literate people who were completely uneducated, so far as he was concerned, because they had not grown out of their infantile frame of mind. Although the majority of Indian people were illiterate, he had great faith in them and that brings me to the very important point which Mr. Krishna Menon made, namely, Nehru's great appreciation of the quality of the Indian people in spite of their illiteracy. Nehru knew that there was a certain quality in them, there was a certain culture, an innate culture in them, and this he valued very greatly. It created a bond between him and the masses of the people. I may say that Jawaharlal Nehru was the author of an idea, and this was very dear to his heart, that there should be a scheme of social service for all college students to go to the villages and spend sometime serving the rural people, from whom they could also learn something. Although the scheme has not yet been implemented because of financial considerations, it has been strongly recommended by the Education Commission recently.

**Dr. S. Huzayyin (U.A.R.):**

In my view the main contribution of Nehru from the educational point of view is that he tried to have two things bear on the life of the new India, i.e., science and technology on the one hand and culture on the other. The old idea, namely, science for the sake of science, is very good in itself, but in a world like ours and in the condition of the developing countries like India and my own, I think, we have perhaps to lay stress at least temporarily on the fact that science should be in the service of society. A little

later on perhaps, when we reach a further stage in development, we can afford to concentrate a good proportion of our efforts in the service of the cause of science for the sake of science.

It was culture that was lacking in our education in the recent past. We have had perhaps enough numbers of educated men, some very highly educated, but cultured men we have in a small minority. It is culture which makes the educated useful, both for himself and for his society. Education, in pre-freedom days, both in my country and in India also, had a philosophy which was far from being a healthy philosophy, because it was producing clerks and social parasites who used their education to exploit society. We have now to use education for paying back to society. I think Nehru's views on education and on the quality of education, on linking education to the people at large, are inspired by the example of his own life. Although he had much education, during his childhood and his youth here and abroad, he came to the people, to the masses and gave them something of his education; he linked himself with the people. I know it would be annoying to hear me saying all this, but India and this generation have a great deal to learn from Nehru, the great man, and in this respect there is a parallel that exists between India and the developing countries in Africa and Asia, and that is very important.

**Prof. Otto von Simson (Federal Republic of Germany):**

It seems very significant to me that the discussion, especially the last intervention, has turned again to culture or rather to the ends of human life and of economic and social development. I also cannot help feeling that both the papers on the theme of "Social Justice and National Development" were such important contributions. It appears from these two papers that there is really in the thought and in the work of Jawaharlal Nehru no distinction between what has been called the "two cultures." Mrs. Myrdal has pointed out, I think completely convincingly, the relation between these two in Mr. Nehru's mind. His was a country based on two world religions and in India he had seen religion and humanity covered with superstition and other things and these impeded and prevented social and economic development. He turned to technology as an indispensable means towards industrialization and in this way he also saw the prerequisites for the social development of his country and of his people.

## ENDS AND MEANS OF DEVELOPMENT

**Shri Romesh Thapar (India):**

The basis of the internal structure in India was to be democracy in a federal polity. A mixed economy was a very essential concept in Panditji's thinking; he felt however that the commanding heights of the economy must

held by the state. The type of administration that was inherited, while it might have helped to consolidate the freedom won in the earlier turbulent years, became a great drag upon the development tasks which the nation had set before itself, and Panditji was not able to change this colonial-type administration. Then again in the course of the development of mixed economy, there developed the enclaves. I or all of us in India call them "vested interests;" very powerful vested interests prevented the development of India in a socialist direction, in an egalitarian direction, and also prevented the state's movement to the commanding heights of economy. When I say we have failed, I would like to qualify it by saying that we have massive achievements but we are now confronted with a tremendous job to get the country to the next plateau. This involves wide change; change involves coercion; if we do not coerce or if we do not make what I call the "national consensus" dynamic, there is a danger of stagnation. There will be a dangerous stagnation.

r. S. Huzayyin (U.A.R.):

I was impressed by Mrs. Myrdal's statement which gave us a concise picture of Nehru's socio-economic ideas. She said that Nehru, to her mind, inherited rebellious ideas from India and took interventionist ideas from the West. Does it not perhaps give a somewhat too simplified picture of the mind of Nehru? If we try to put it the other way round, in the form of ends and means, I think Nehru, so far as ends were concerned, was entirely Indian. His ends perhaps emanated through India: he aimed at the upliftment of his people and for the redress of history so as to give India her place as a very valuable member nation of humanity. However, his means and methods were not purely Indian. They were a very happy blend of his identification with and understanding of Indian life, on the one hand, and of what could be learnt from the West and applied to India, on the other. He had his own means of socialistic application in India. His socialism in India was the truth of what he learnt in Europe, especially from Eastern Europe, and what he thought could be practised to the best advantage in India amongst his own people.

Shri P.N. Dhar (India):

I think a part of the difficulties we are facing in this country today is that we are trying not to counter historical lessons but to create new precedents in history. I will quote one example where historical lesson seems to me to be very pertinent.\* There is enough historical evidence to suggest that the most basic feature of all economies that have gone through development is that their most crucial period has been the period of high investment. Economists have simplified this perhaps by saying that a backward economy must move at the rate of 15 to 20 per cent as against the usual 5 per cent in order to break the barriers to growth and prosperity. The increase in

\* See Mrs. Alva Myrdal's paper, p. 47.

these statistical percentages however is not a cause but an effect. The problem really is: what is the cause? One historical fact seems to be unmistakable, that in all the periods when gigantic and prolonged investment effort has been made whether in Britain, in Germany, in Japan or in Russia, these periods of successful industrial revolutions have been triggered off by members of the elite who were stern and puritanical people dedicated to their tasks. This is true of the British middle class; it was true of the eastern Junkers and the western industrialists of Germany; it was true of the pioneers of American development who went on the voyage to the West; it was true of the Japanese samurai; it was also true of the Russian Bolsheviks. They all possessed a common feature: they were able to keep consumption down and draw out the fullest energies of their people for the building up of their resources of capital.

Now one of the difficulties we face in this country is that we are trying to stimulate growth and accumulate capital under circumstances where the emphasis on austerity or the lowering down of consumption gets dissipated because this process is taking place under circumstances of political democracy and under a federal system that encompasses a country that has certain parts more developed and other parts less developed. Therefore, what I wanted to say was that to say history has no lessons for the newly-developing countries sounds to me a little too negative. I think the problem is how to meet this historical challenge.

**Shri Shan Lal (India):**

Mr. Thapar provides the key to an understanding of Pandit Nehru's approach to political and economic problems at home by viewing it as a continuous search for national consensus. The middle path which Panditji followed did not merely help to avert a violent confrontation between the Right and the Left which might have seriously impaired the unity of the country. It also enabled him to keep regional, communal and caste conflicts within bounds. The result is that India has enjoyed a high degree of political stability in the last 20 years and has been spared the horrors of civil strife which has been the sad lot of so many developing nations. However, a consensus is only a means of finding out how far the people will go on a given issue in a given situation. By itself it does not create a sense of national identity or national ethos. Mr. Thapar posed the question whether Pandit Nehru's obsession with consensus was responsible for the retention of a colonial type of apparatus or administration. In my view, consensus has had nothing to do with it and the mass of the people, except for those at the top of the administrative hierarchy, would have welcomed wholeheartedly a complete break from the past at least in this field. The failure to act at the very start has made effective action to adapt the apparatus to new needs increasingly difficult with each passing year. But it is no use regretting past failure. The real question is what can be done now to make up for lost time and set right old wrongs.

**Dr. Clovis Maksoud (League of Arab States):**

I hear a great deal about consensus and I am not always sure what it means. I think in a pluralistic society as obtains in my country and in India and many Asian and African countries, there is a certain consensus, and that is what is the national movement. That is what made anti-colonialism achieve and elicit spontaneous response. But after independence the consensus cannot be sustained at the same level as it was before, because the nature of one of the challenges that brought about the consensus, namely, imperialism and colonialism, changes and inevitably some sections of the society within the internal framework of a nation are bound to be hurt. Therefore, the consensus cannot always be objective when the dictates of social consciousness are necessary. That I think is very important because in moving a society towards development, the intervention that has been spoken about here is inevitable, and intervention means a large measure of regulation of the interplay of social and economic forces.

**Shri V.K. Krishna Menon (India):**

I believe the most outstanding characteristic of Panditji was his insistence on the quality of method. That is to say, he was not prepared to go there somehow. The second thing that is almost embarrassing in some cases is the degree of intellectual integrity. Thirdly, it was the experience of most of us that Nehru never pushed things to the point of no return. It is also correct to say that his approach to problems was at no time conditioned by fear of consequences; if they came he would take them that way.

The ideas of social justice are now universally accepted in India and I believe toward the later stage of Panditji's administration and stewardship of the country, people had increasingly recognized that mere welfare measures were not socialism; a social welfare state is not necessarily a socialist state nor is the ownership of some establishments by the government in itself socialization. Socialism means community control, the policy of development being identical with or as near as possible and progressively approaching our social goals—the greatest good of the greatest number of our people.

Now naturally in a system where everything is done in the open, where everybody has the right to criticize and, what is more, decisions can only be taken, are usually taken, as a result of the "middle-of-the-road approach" and by the pressure of so many pulls, it may be that what was conceived might not come about in the end. But there can be no question at any time, either then or now, of departing from the socialist goal; never has this country departed from the socialist goal or the hopes of achieving it; nor is it possible for us to think that there is any other way because socialism to us is not a doctrine or dogma; it is a social imperative, a social imperative because of the poverty of our people.

## Jawaharlal Nehru's Ideal and the Action of Unesco

Mr. M. Elmandjra (Unesco):

Jawaharlal Nehru was convinced that it is in the minds of men that you can build the defences of peace. It would be interesting to have an exchange of views on how in fact and to what extent has Unesco—by Unesco I do not mean just the secretariat, for it is an organization of 120 Member States covering the whole world community—contributed to this objective in the light of its 20 years' experience. Is it true that it is in the minds of men that you build the defences of peace? We are taking it for granted in view of our Constitution, but I think some of the people around this table, as thinkers, economists, scientists and philosophers, may have something to say on this matter. Maybe the idea is basically right, but you cannot test it within 20 years. You can build for peace through human progress, but that takes time. In other words, you build for peace when you combat underdevelopment. You build peace when you have less illiterate in the world. This again is a basic concept for Unesco, which the participants may wish to discuss. And also perhaps discuss the question to what extent has Unesco been the conscience of the world.

Cardinal Valerian Gracias (India):

I would like to have a clarification from the Assistant Director-General on this point of Unesco being the conscience of the world community. It would be very illuminating for us to know whether we have actually lived up to that objective and to what extent.

Mr. M. Elmandjra (Unesco):

It is a very challenging question. As an international servant—I insist on the word "servant"—our first duty is to execute and it is difficult for me to make an evaluation of this kind. The important thing is for the Member States themselves to assess how they think they have contributed to this ideal and to what extent they believe Unesco has played the role of the "conscience of the world."

Shri P.N. Kirpal (India):

This is, of course, one of the basic problems. It is true that Jawaharlal Nehru called Unesco the conscience of the world community. But Unesco

is an intergovernmental organization, and it is the governments of the world who get together and adopt programme resolutions, decide upon policies and approve a budget. Thus when we come down to the work of commissions, committees and the secretariat, etc., what comes out is the concerted action of governments.

However, in Unesco's Constitution there is an article asking Member States to set up National Commissions in which non-governmental organizations, artists, poets, scientists and so on are to be represented. This is part of the framework of Unesco. If this mechanism of National Commissions could develop and assume a larger role in the setup of the organization, perhaps there will be greater means of expressing the conscience of the world community. Although the organization is engaged in most of its work in the fields of Education, Science and Culture, it is people who are not members of government, who are not official, who are independent thinkers and creative leaders. There is always a need for the Unesco General Conference, composed as it is of the leaders of the world, to voice their sentiments, feelings and ideals, contribute to the concept of the conscience of the world, especially on the major issues of the times.

**Mr. Stephen Spender (U.K.):**

I really want to express my confusion about the terms that are being used. Let us examine this statement that Unesco is the conscience of the world community. How could it be any such thing? How can an organization be the conscience of the world? It would be truer surely to say that Mr. Nehru was the conscience of the world. Only the great religious leaders—a Christ, a Buddha, a Gandhi—have been the conscience of the world.

**Shri Asoka Mehta (India):**

It is true that an organization can never be an embodiment of conscience. The ineluctable dichotomy between small man and small society, between spirit and action is known to all men and women. The question one is entitled to ask is: During the last 20 years, as the result of the work that Unesco has done and the opportunities that it has provided to thinkers of the world, to what extent has greater understanding emerged in different member countries about different cultures and all the rest of it? The point to be considered is: To what extent the principle for which this organization was set up has in fact been made a part of our life? I think it is not enough to ask the Member States whether they have functioned as the conscience of the world. Today no government is functioning as the conscience of the world. The point is whether, basically, in the minds and hearts of the people we have created some kind of a unity, whether humanity is getting over fracturedness, isolation and parochialism and emerging with a sense of unity and with a vision of integrity.

Dr. S. Huzayyin (U.A.R.):

I am very glad that the question put by Cardinal Gracias has touched a deeper aspect of our work in Unesco generally, and perhaps the particular work of this conference itself. After all, we have to ask ourselves, what is Unesco? I remember during the last War a number of representatives of governments met in London before Unesco came into being. I happened to attend some of these meetings which took place out of the feeling that war was a disaster which could have been avoided if there was more conscience in world action—and in the action of people in different parts of the world. It was because of this feeling that the idea of Unesco emerged.

If we are trying to build the forces of peace in the minds of men, it is more towards the conscience of men that we should direct our attention. Training the mind is a much easier task than enhancing the spirit and the conscience, and that is where Mr. Nehru was really great because he put his finger on the deeper aim of Unesco, namely, its conscience and its ethical aim, which are far more important than what Unesco may make or contribute. Its resources are so limited that there is much discussion in the General Conference about the budget; most of the members go there to take more than they give. I think Unesco has a wider meaning, a wider connotation to my mind, and it would not be doing justice to Unesco to judge it just by the actions of governments meeting and passing resolutions. It has a wider and deeper sense, and I think it is the deeper philosophical meaning of Unesco to which Mr. Nehru referred and to which we should direct our attention.

Mr. John Freeman (U.K.):

As Mr. Asoka Mehta has pointed out just now, an organization of governments cannot conceivably be the conscience of anything, and all of us who have served in government, I am sure, will endorse that statement. Jawaharlal Nehru, as one of the great prophets and teachers of our generation, of this century, thought it his duty to emphasize the ethical nature of Unesco's work and, therefore, he committed himself to such remarks as Unesco being the conscience of mankind. But I cannot believe that he would disagree when we say that this is only a half truth.

The truth in my view is that social conscience—I am not talking of man's relation with his God—is something that only people who have got some stake in social life can afford to have. You cannot talk about social conscience in terms of starving people or people who are suffering from one thing or another. Similarly, if peace is built in the minds of men, a proposition may also be built by practical men that if you do not have food and houses, there cannot be any peace in mind. Therefore, if Unesco is to be the instrument of conscience, its real problem lies in resolving the dilemma between the practical and the ethical means. This question is the sort of thing which may have been referred to from time to time in our



discussions. But while considering Unesco and Nehru, let us go by their achievements and not by their words, because you may come up against two accounts of Unesco or, for that matter, two accounts of Jawaharlal Nehru, if you apply that test.

**Prof. Otto von Simson (Federal Republic of Germany):**

Unesco by its very nature is an organization concerned with values. Those of us who like myself have sat on the Executive Board will recall the long discussions we have had on such questions as the elaboration of values and the setting of standards. These constitute a very important criteria in the decisions that are reached about Unesco programmes. As Mr. Kirpal has reminded us, it is of course an intergovernmental organization and those who represent the different Member States have to weigh the national interests against larger objectives. We have to see that Unesco is always just a little bit farther than would have been possible in a purely political framework.

To my mind, Unesco has by its very existence proved the meaning of what Jawaharlal Nehru had in his mind when he described it as the conscience of the world.

**Dr. Clovis Maksoud (League of Arab States):**

If I may probe deeper into this, why is it that Jawaharlal Nehru is so relevant to Unesco and why is or was Unesco so vital to Nehru? I think both are committed in their objectives and behaviour patterns to the central position of man in society. In Nehru's mind, Unesco was the basic laboratory for not only coexistence, because that was assumed, but for cultural codiscovery and technical coaction of nations pooling together into a unified pilot project which would enlarge in future. This, I think, is the essence of the relevance of Nehru to Unesco. The experiment of Unesco is a pilot project for the conscience of man and not an embodiment of the conscience of man.

A constant communion between Nehru the intellectual and Nehru the politician and between India and the world makes Nehru a man of Unesco because it is in this context that Unesco sought to stimulate these forces that make the new man possible of emergence. I am sure that technical action, as mentioned by the Assistant Director-General, and ethical means, as Mr. Freeman has adequately said it, is a superficial dichotomy; that as long as we wanted to ensure the centrality of man, it was necessary to encourage the machine, yet not to allow the machine to dehumanize man. It is here that Nehru becomes relevant. It is he who sought to introduce the machine but not the fear of the machine. To those who were saying that the machine might erode the spiritual values of traditional society, he imposed a corrective. But to those who sought to render man subordinate to the machine, he brought the cultural values of society. I think Jawaharlal

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I would like to have a clarification from the Assistant Director-General on this point of Unesco being the conscience of the world community. It would be very illuminating for us to know whether we have actually lived up to that objective and to what extent.

Mr. M. Elmandjra (Unesco):

It is a very challenging question. As an international servant—I insist on the word "servant"—our first duty is to execute and it is difficult for me to make an evaluation of this kind. The important thing is for the Member States themselves to assess how they think they have contributed to this ideal and to what extent they believe Unesco has played the role of the "conscience of the world."

Shri P.N. Kirpal (India):

This is, of course, one of the basic problems. It is true that Jawaharlal Nehru called Unesco the conscience of the world community. But Unesco

is an intergovernmental organization, and it is the governments of the world who get together and adopt programme resolutions, decide upon policies and approve a budget. Thus when we come down to the work of commissions, committees and the secretariat, etc., what comes out is the concerted action of governments.

However, in Unesco's Constitution there is an article asking Member States to set up National Commissions in which non-governmental organizations, artists, poets, scientists and so on are to be represented. This is part of the framework of Unesco. If this mechanism of National Commissions could develop and assume a larger role in the setup of the world organization, perhaps there will be greater means of expressing the conscience of the world community. Although the organization is governmental, most of its work in the fields of Education, Science and Culture is done by people who are not members of government, who are not officials, but who are independent thinkers and creative leaders. There is always a tendency for the Unesco General Conference, composed as it is of the leaders of the world, to voice their sentiments, feelings and ideals, contributing to the concept of the conscience of the world, especially on the major issues of our times.

**Mr. Stephen Spender (U.K.):**

I really want to express my confusion about the terms that are being used. Let us examine this statement that Unesco is the conscience of the world community. How could it be any such thing? How can an organization be the conscience of the world? It would be truer surely to say that Mr. Nehru was the conscience of the world. Only the great religious leaders—a Christ, a Buddha, a Gandhi—have been the conscience of the world.

**Shri Asoka Mehta (India):**

It is true that an organization can never be an embodiment of conscience. The ineluctable dichotomy between small man and small society, between spirit and action is known to all men and women. The question one is entitled to ask is: During the last 20 years, as the result of the work that Unesco has done and the opportunities that it has provided to thinkers of the world, to what extent has greater understanding emerged in different member countries about different cultures and all the rest of it? The point to be considered is: To what extent the principle for which this organization was set up has in fact been made a part of our life? I think it is not enough to ask the Member States whether they have functioned as the conscience of the world. Today no government is functioning as the conscience of the world. The point is whether, basically, in the minds and hearts of the people we have created some kind of a unity, whether humanity is getting over fracturedness, isolation and parochialism and emerging with a sense of unity and with a vision of integrity.

Dr. S. Huzayyin (U.A.R.):

I am very glad that the question put by Cardinal Gracias has touched a deeper aspect of our work in Unesco generally, and perhaps the particular work of this conference itself. After all, we have to ask ourselves, what is Unesco? I remember during the last War a number of representatives of governments met in London before Unesco came into being. I happened to attend some of these meetings which took place out of the feeling that war was a disaster which could have been avoided if there was more co-operation in world action—and in the action of people in different parts of the world. It was because of this feeling that the idea of Unesco emerged.

If we are trying to build the forces of peace in the minds of men, it is more towards the conscience of men that we should direct our attention. Training the mind is a much easier task than enhancing the spirit and the conscience, and that is where Mr. Nehru was really great because he put his finger on the deeper aim of Unesco, namely, its conscience and its ethical aim, which are far more important than what Unesco may make or contribute. Its resources are so limited that there is much discussion in the General Conference about the budget; most of the members go there to take more than they give. I think Unesco has a wider meaning, a wider connotation to my mind, and it would not be doing justice to Unesco to judge it just by the actions of governments meeting and passing resolutions. It has a wider and deeper sense, and I think it is the deeper philosophical meaning of Unesco to which Mr. Nehru referred and to which we should direct our attention.

Mr. John Freeman (U.K.):

As Mr. Asoka Mehta has pointed out just now, an organization of governments cannot conceivably be the conscience of anything, and all of us who have served in government, I am sure, will endorse that statement. Jawaharlal Nehru, as one of the great prophets and teachers of our generation, of this century, thought it his duty to emphasize the ethical nature of Unesco's work and, therefore, he committed himself to such remarks as Unesco being the conscience of mankind. But I cannot believe that he would disagree when we say that this is only a half truth.

The truth in my view is that social conscience—I am not talking of man's relation with his God—is something that only people who have got some stake in social life can afford to have. You cannot talk about social conscience in terms of starving people or people who are suffering from one thing or another. Similarly, if peace is built in the minds of men a proposition may also be built by practical men that if you do not have food and houses, there cannot be any peace in mind. Therefore, if Unesco is to be the instrument of conscience, its real problem lies in resolving the dilemma between the practical and the ethical means. This question is the sort of thing which may have been referred to from time to time in o

discussions. But while considering Unesco and Nehru, let us go by their achievements and not by their words, because you may come up against two accounts of Unesco or, for that matter, two accounts of Jawaharlal Nehru, if you apply that test.

**Prof. Otto von Simson (Federal Republic of Germany):**

Unesco by its very nature is an organization concerned with values. Those of us who like myself have sat on the Executive Board will recall the long discussions we have had on such questions as the elaboration of values and the setting of standards. These constitute a very important criteria in the decisions that are reached about Unesco programmes. As Mr. Kirpal has reminded us, it is of course an intergovernmental organization and those who represent the different Member States have to weigh the national interests against larger objectives. We have to see that Unesco is always just a little bit farther than would have been possible in a purely political framework.

To my mind, Unesco has by its very existence proved the meaning of what Jawaharlal Nehru had in his mind when he described it as the conscience of the world.

**Dr. Clovis Maksoud (League of Arab States):**

If I may probe deeper into this, why is it that Jawaharlal Nehru is so relevant to Unesco and why is or was Unesco so vital to Nehru? I think both are committed in their objectives and behaviour patterns to the central position of man in society. In Nehru's mind, Unesco was the basic laboratory for not only coexistence, because that was assumed, but for cultural codiscovery and technical coaction of nations pooling together into a unified pilot project which would enlarge in future. This, I think, is the essence of the relevance of Nehru to Unesco. The experiment of Unesco is a pilot project for the conscience of man and not an embodiment of the conscience of man.

A constant communion between Nehru the intellectual and Nehru the politician and between India and the world makes Nehru a man of Unesco because it is in this context that Unesco sought to stimulate these forces that make the new man possible of emergence. I am sure that technical action, as mentioned by the Assistant Director-General, and ethical means, as Mr. Freeman has adequately said it, is a superficial dichotomy; that as long as we wanted to ensure the centrality of man, it was necessary to encourage the machine, yet not to allow the machine to dehumanize man. It is here that Nehru becomes relevant. It is he who sought to introduce the machine but not the fear of the machine. To those who were saying that the machine might erode the spiritual values of traditional society, he imposed a corrective. But to those who sought to render man subordinate to the machine, he brought the cultural values of society. I think Jawaharlal

Nehru was the great corrective of this generation whereby the apparent contradictions were brought into focus and perspective.

**Shri Romesh Thapar (India):**

One of the most important concepts which Jawaharlal Nehru had in his mind was the concept of a new standard of living. This is an aspect ignored in our discussions and yet it is fundamental to any consideration of the question of building peace in the minds of men. I do not subscribe to metaphysical flights—I do not understand them—but the concept of a standard of living I understand, particularly in the context of my country. We have over 500 million people to cope with and if we are able, through the intelligent, integrated action of educationists, scientists, technicians and architects, etc., to design a standard of living that is both satisfactory and inexpensive for these millions, I believe that Unesco's work for peace would become immediately relevant. How do you provide a good life? You do not provide it by inculcating values or ethical standards prevailing in the advanced countries. I do not wish to be rude, but we have seen that certain developing societies, including ours, where a small element in society is able to build up a standard of living, tend to imitate all the trashiness which prevails in advanced countries.

I do not see Unesco making an impact on this very, very sensitive field. Now it could be argued that this is an economic problem. It is not. It is essentially a problem of the most talented and creative men getting together and applying their minds to what I consider to be the major problem of this century—the provision of a real standard of living. If we could help in this job, we would be doing a great service to the world and translating what I believe was Jawaharlal's dream.

**Dr. Paul Braisted (U.S.A.):**

It might be appropriate to speak about the East-West Major Project. As you know, it was designed in part to call attention to something very fundamental in the whole outlook of Unesco, with its emphasis on mutual exchange and appreciation of cultural values. Having followed the programme in the Consultative Committee, I can say that the response to the project from the very beginning was very wide, almost universal. It was not just a case of Asians and the West coming together in the project. One of the very strong pleas before us was an appeal from the Middle East not to be left out. Then in a very short time it was the people of Latin America who said, "we must have a part in it." Very soon African countries came along and they wanted to participate. It seems to me that the idea of mutuality and appreciation of cultural values of different people struck a deep chord of response. This I take to be of vital concern to people everywhere and within Unesco also. Mr. Kirpal has pointed out some of the limitations of Unesco and called attention to the National Commi-



ssions and their role. I would go much farther than that and say that Unesco and its activities and the National Commissions and their activities are part of a much wider network of scholarship, the work of universities and cultural and scientific institutions all over the world. We have truly a wide network of people who are in many ways working to make international co-operation even more vital and effective.

**Prince Prem Purachatra (Thailand):**

When we talk of Unesco, we must beware of thinking of a group of select people sitting in the air-conditioned comfort of Unesco House. We must think of Unesco with all its ramifications spread all over the world. As was suggested just now by Dr. Braisted, it is not only Unesco and its regional offices of various kinds, there are the National Commissions spread all over the world and innumerable affiliated organizations and associations. So I think we should be very careful at this stage when we either praise or criticize Unesco; we must have in mind what we are praising or criticizing. I thought that it might be useful at this stage to mention this.

**Shri M. Chalapathi Rau (India):**

I do feel that we should not idealize Unesco and blame Unesco for not being what it is not meant to be. We all know the limitations of international organizations. Unesco is one of the specialized agencies of the United Nations. When I think of this relationship between one inter-governmental organization and another, I am reminded of what Jawaharlal Nehru used to say not only about Unesco but about the United Nations. He had a view of the world into which we have to fit in his view of the United Nations and of Unesco.

What is Unesco? It has a Constitution, a shining preamble, Member Governments and a secretariat. I need not speak about the Constitution. Unesco experts, including yourselves, know about it. But I would like to suggest that some thought may be devoted to the desirability of amending the Unesco Constitution after the experience we have had of 20 years. Its membership has grown up. It now represents so many cultures. We talk of two cultures, East and West. There is really the culture of one continent against another, one nation against another. Unesco can only do what the Member Governments enable it to do. When we think of Unesco we have to be clear about what we are thinking of. Are we thinking of Member Governments, or the secretariat, or the Constitution itself? Whatever the limitations, Jawaharlal Nehru is dead but Unesco is there. Unesco has to go on growing, taking more and more action in pursuance of its ideals.

**Shri Sham Lal (India):**

I am afraid there has been too much of philosophizing in this discussion

so far. Philosophy can be a means of probing a problem in depth. But it can as often be a means of evading it.

Take, for instance, the phrase quoted by so many speakers. "War begins in the minds of men and it is here that the defences of peace must be built." It is not a metaphysical problem at all but a plain and simple practical challenge. What sort of defences? And what action, if any, has Unesco taken to build these? One would presume that the first defence would be doing away with everything in the educational system that tends to deepen international misunderstandings and hatreds. Has Unesco made any worthwhile impact here? It has recently undertaken a project to produce a history of mankind. But so far the kind of history envisaged by Pandit Nehru or by Unesco has not been adopted in the school curriculum anywhere. Not even in India. In any case, is it possible to produce a history, particularly of the last 65 years, and not hurt the national ego of any country?

Another way to build the defences of peace in the minds of men is to encourage mutual appreciation of Eastern and Western cultures. Unesco has had a programme under way for some years and classics, both old and new, have been translated into various languages. But this work has had no more than marginal influence so far. Individuals like Arthur Waley, Rene Guenon and Ananda Coomaraswamy have done more to interpret Eastern civilizations to the West.

The third way in which Unesco can probably build the defences of peace is by emphasizing the peaceful purposes of science and technology for the welfare of people all over the world. But has it in any way succeeded in dissuading nations from spending billions of dollars and roubles on the mass manufacture of new weapons of total destruction? In human terms, has Unesco done enough to bring home to people all over the world what the war in Vietnam means to the men, women and children of that country? If anything, during the last 20 years there has been a visible coarsening of the conscience of mankind, if one can speak of such a thing. Otherwise, millions of people all over the world will not be accepting with so much resignation the daily bombing of a hapless country.

Perhaps in some vague way Pandit Nehru had a universal vision of man and his problems. But what really matters is not vision but concrete action to translate the vision into action. In evaluating the role of Nehru or of Unesco, it is absolutely necessary therefore to look at the lengthening shadow which falls between the idea and the reality.

Senor Octavio Paz (Mexico):

I think Mr. Sham Lal was very right, and I thoroughly agree with him, when he says that there is a great difference between ideas and action. I also think he went into the crux of the matter when he pointed out some of the problems facing Unesco. It has two functions, the ethical and the practical. The first does not literally mean that Unesco is the conscience

of the world but suggests that it can be the meeting place of the best minds in the world. And along with the ethical side, there is the practical side.

Shri P.N. Kirpal (India):

I believe that in the thinking of Jawaharlal Nehru the idea of Unesco, the preamble of Unesco, meant the primacy of the mind over everything else, a certain cultural commitment to which Dr. Maksoud has referred, a cultural commitment which somehow was never translated in life, because life functions largely in the political sphere, grappling with economic problems, working through traditional, conventional institutions of government; but an overriding cultural commitment was always present. As Dr. Paul Braisted has said, Unesco is not merely a secretariat in Paris, or the General Conference of 120 Member States meeting once in two years, but the things of the mind, the refinement of the heart, the sensitivity of mind, the whole world of education, science and culture. In this context, Mr. Chalapathi Rau has made a very interesting suggestion—whether the time has not come after 20 years of Unesco to think about the Constitution of this organization. Can you, through an inter-governmental body, establish the intellectual and moral solidarity of mankind? This is the real question.

I think Mr. Elmandjra was right when he said that if you analyse the statements of Nehru on Unesco, Nehru spoke mainly on its ideal and very seldom, if at all, on its practical action. The practical action of Unesco has somehow been not really very great practical action; the resources at the disposal of Unesco are less than the budget of one average American university. I think that it has come out in this discussion very well that there is a great difference between what is legally Unesco, its financial and constitutional limitations, and what was the ideal of Unesco to which Nehru referred frequently.

Cardinal Gracias (India):

Since I set the ball rolling, I must make some reparation by speaking a few words at the end of this very intelligent discussion. I had an ulterior motive in raising this question. Apart from the fact that I learnt a great deal during the debate, the ulterior motive is this.

I know that Nehru would never say a thing he did not mean. When he said that Unesco was the conscience of the world community, he meant every word of it. He himself had said that he was not wedded to any dogma or religion. He never posed as a moralist. And yet we find in so many speeches of his that he insisted on fundamental principles. If Unesco provides very strong support for such statements, for instance, those made by the Holy Father at various times, naturally greater good can result. For example, this morning in his memorable speech our President made a reference to what the Holy Father had said recently and he supported his appeal. So that was the reason why I raised this fundamental question.



## Design for Integrated Living

by

ROMESH THAPAR

Unesco is founded on the belief that there can be no true peace unless there is a consensus of the mind for an order which the mind esteems. All societies are evolving organisms and we as the moulders of these societies must learn from the extension and liberation of human knowledge in the last 200 years. If we are all in a process of evolution, we must understand what we are evolving towards. Should we not then project our comprehension of human activity towards achieving this vision?

When we look around this world of ours we are astonished not so much by the contrasts in social patterns within human societies as by the similarity of problems which are being sparked in the course of rapid scientific and technological advance. This general phenomenon, unaffected by the fact that development in various regions is at different levels and is planned at different speeds, does suggest that we must now address ourselves to the question of fashioning what has been called 'the understructure' of the possible first true world civilization.

It is a challenge which cuts across East-West and North-South divisions, for if the understructure is defective or unbalanced it will topple the edifices we are seeking to build. The past tells us how human society became a slave to its technology. There is a danger that technology may remain a deity—whether worshipped in high-powered mass media or projected in the neon lights of metropolitan cities or expressed in the aspirations of developing countries. It must become what it has always been intended to be—a tool in the hands of man with which to improve, if not perfect, his life on this planet. This task demands the collective thought of the creative intellectual workers of the world.

If we were to reduce the understructure to its various components, we would find that the most critical element is the value system which has come to be associated with what we call 'a standard of living'. We are thrusting into the future without any clear idea of the kind of life we want to give ourselves.

This lack of objective affects all societies, developed and developing. Those which have advanced to a certain stage of affluence are in the grip of wasteful living, despite backward enclaves. Those which are beginning to advance, and which already possess pockets of affluence, are damaging their limited resources in imitating wasteful standards.

If it is our intention to humanize man and to elevate him above his present wretched conditions to a level of simple, aesthetic living within the foreseeable future, then there can be no running away from the forgotten

business of making a critical assessment of the relevance of so-called affluent standards to different cultural patterns, and of the specific needs and the more fundamental values by which man should live.

Our world, witnessing traumatic transformations in science and technology, which in their total, uncontrolled impact on man have dehumanized the processes of development, is at last becoming more conscious of the pressures which push us into habits and value systems that generate social tensions and exhaust and destroy the gains of decades of endeavour. Voices are being raised to warn us against our accepted notions of what constitutes the good life.

Indeed, the more one investigates the prevailing concept of 'a minimum standard of living' the more one is surprised by the lack of awareness of excessive human needs and interests in it. Yet, ironically enough, all economic and social planning is conditioned by our unthinking acceptance of the inevitability of enthroning such a standard.

If the past of man is a teacher, then let us learn from it.

Many factors contributed to the decay of the great civilizations that flowered on this planet. It is significant that decadence was 'sown' when the civilizations of the past reached a level of contemporary affluence, when opulence and luxury began to eat their way into the firm fibre of the people. We are again, in our own times, witnessing some such development despite the glaring contrast of depressed living standards which prevail for an overwhelming majority of mankind.

Today, conspicuous, wasteful affluence is not confined to this or that region. Pockets of such affluence exist everywhere, infecting values, damaging human relationships, creating alienation within the orbit of affluence and feeding the desire for imitation in circles not so affluent.

In the context of a population which increases more rapidly than our present capacity to mobilize resources, and the need at every level intelligently and creatively, without frustrating individual expression, to control the demand for more and more of what is not really essential for the development of man, it is necessary to inculcate new principles of civilized living and at the same time to engineer the basic materials that are an integral part of it. This design for living becomes in a sense a design for survival on an essentially human plane of dignity.

The rationale for such an approach is compounded of the realities around us. We speak with feeling about the simple, satisfying life, the cutting down of unnecessary consumption, the perils of status symbols that distort tastes and values, the contradiction between thought and practice which makes a mockery of the pretensions of our civilization. Yet, little is done at any level organizationally to translate feeling into action.

On the one hand, we are the unconscious proponents of a way of life based on waste. On the other, to create the material for this waste, we work overtime. In the process, time itself becomes precious, something which is employed to amass the resources for wasteful spending upon which individual—and now even national—status depends.

This equation between individuals and the nation is not unscientific. If we were to subtract the time taken each day to produce materials for the wasteful life in affluent enclaves the world over, we would realize what a self-defeating operation modern civilization has become—self-defeating because it destroys or restricts the possibilities of creative leisure, to increase which, after all, should be the objective of all social and economic activity.

And this is a cult which is taking root everywhere. Dreams of a life as lush as in the glossiest magazines reflect natural desires and strivings, but these should be given fresh and meaningful content if we really intend to ensure a stable and satisfying life for the depressed millions who comprise two-thirds of mankind and who are rising to claim their place in the sun.

This approach has nothing in common with the activities of those who romanticize primitiveness, who seek relevance in a revivalist code, or who search for personal salvation in the extremes of nihilism and regimentation. In fact, these are the aberrations spawned by the unresolved contradictions developing in our world civilization.

We must, by continuous questioning of these aberrations, by sustained and practical experimentation among our communities, by consciously propagating values that militate against waste and ostentation, by projecting the healthiest elements of our heritage, restate what a creative standard of living should be and interpret it in the scientific and technological forms of a civilized society which refuses to be corrupted and has abounding faith in its future and in the validity of its commitment.

Of course, viewing a world composed of societies sharply divided by the lines of poverty and wealth, by the boundaries of town and village, by the contrasts of traditional and modern thought, by varying social and cultural patterns, the task of establishing any kind of general standard might at first seem quixotic. The problem is complex and has many facets.

Priorities have to be located with more than ordinary skill. The integration of man and his environment encompasses the value system by which we should live and raise the question of how to avoid the pitfalls of affluence. Yet, the immensity of the challenge alone should be enough to inspire thinking minds to address themselves to the problem which, if resolved, could end waste and open the way to a speedier and more purposeful rate of economic growth.

Where does one begin?

Cities are no longer the efficient mechanisms by which man organizes his life; they have become or are becoming 'concrete jungles', elaborate barracks of atomized groups defeating the very purpose of a meaningful life. Is it here that we strike the first blow?

Or do we turn our attention to the farm or village, where for centuries the same primitive materials have been used to provide shelter from rain, sun and wind? At this stage of development, perhaps it would be idle to attempt to inculcate in isolation or in vacuum those values which could make the private home a simple, aesthetic haven from the hectic activity outside.

Perhaps we should for the moment be content to clean up the more obvious complexities of collective living.

Questions and doubts will naturally crowd the mind as they have always done when new answers are sought to age-old challenges. We must, in other words, locate and dissect the key problems, problems which are common to all societies and which hinder the effort to humanize this exciting era of change.

Only that change is worthwhile which changes man. We have to conceive it, engineer it, and make it part of the consciousness of man.

Change could be sparked by the creation of new and more relevant materials to replace the still unequalled mud of the village home. Change could be shaped by the manufacture of basic utilities such as chairs or tables or beds, evolved by the advanced skills of our civilization and put within the easy reach of the poorest in our societies. Change could be introduced by a simple device which ends centuries of toil in millions of homes. Change could be speeded up by the creative sharing of the traditional expertise of distant communities. Change could be consolidated by modern 'do-it-yourself' techniques which salvage man from becoming a cog in a vast productive machine.

All this change would have to be processed by mass manufacture through the market, as it were, in competition with the kind of materials, goods and services upon which wasteful standards are based. The most sensitive minds would have to collaborate in order to interpret, design and implement the competitive alternatives for man in growth. Then, perhaps, we could claim that we are attempting the beginnings of an answer to the fundamental needs of man, now at long last capable of mastering his fate.



## Concluding Statement

by

PREM KIRPAL, SECRETARY-GENERAL, INDIAN NATIONAL COMMISSION

On behalf of the Indian National Commission, I wish to thank Unesco for organizing the International Round Table on "Jawaharlal Nehru's Role in the Modern World." During the meetings many aspects of Jawaharlal Nehru's personality and his efforts and achievements were discussed by the distinguished participants coming from many parts of the world. Conforming to the Resolution adopted by the General Conference of Unesco at its 13th Session in 1964, the Round Table brought together thinkers, philosophers, scientists, educationists, writers, artists and publicists from all over the world. They considered some of the great themes of human civilization that distinguish Eastern and Western cultures and reveal their common bonds. They discussed these matters in a spirit of freedom and cordiality, highlighting the fact that it was an encounter of minds, representing different disciplines and cultures but sharing the basic ideals of Unesco. And they examined these themes as thinkers in their personal capacity, without any limitations imposed by their official commitments and responsibilities.

I would like to express, on behalf of the Indian National Commission, our great satisfaction at the results of the discussions. Many new and constructive ideas which could be of great value to the work of the National Commission and also to Unesco programmes of international co-operation were formulated and discussed. There was, especially, one new and fascinating proposal from Shri Romesh Thapar, which was inspired by a profound observation made by Jawaharlal Nehru in his Azad Memorial Lecture in 1959. In the course of his address he said:

*Tomorrow's India will be what we make it by today's labours. I have no doubt that India will progress industrially and otherwise; that she will advance in science and technology; that our peoples' standard will rise, that education will spread and that health conditions will be better, and that art and culture will enrich peoples' lives. . . . What I am concerned with is not merely our material progress, but the quality and depth of our people. Gaining power through industrial processes will they lose themselves in the quest of individual wealth and soft living? That would be a tragedy, for that would be a negation of what India has stood for in the past, and I think in the present time also as exemplified by Gandhi. Power is necessary, but wisdom is essential. It is only power with wisdom that is good. . . . Can we combine the progress of science and technology with this progress of the mind and spirit also?*

In attempting to answer the problem posed by Jawaharlal Nehru, the Round Table thought that a new and major programme of Unesco entitled "Design for Integrated Living" could be launched by the world organization in collaboration with Member States and National Commissions. Such a programme would be related to the importance of economic and social development, the humanizing of its processes, the consideration of its ultimate goal, and the quest for better life among communities and individuals in developing societies. It was felt that a critical assessment was needed of the relevance of the affluent standard of living to different cultural patterns and of the concrete needs and fundamental values by which man should live. This task appears especially urgent in newly independent nations which are in the process of development and have an opportunity to avoid the waste that affluence generates wherever technological advance is considered as an end in itself. It was felt that the future of developing societies depended on how the technical advance of highly developed countries could be used for not merely improving, but for reinterpreting and redesigning, their standard of living in order to integrate man and his environment and thus enable him to lead a more satisfying life. The talent and experience of the world's finest thinkers, educationists, designers, architects, scientists and technicians can be utilized in studying the needs and capacities of different regions and societies to design homes—rural and urban—places of work and play, and all the things that man uses in his daily life, while helping to free him from the race for more and more of what is not really essential for the development of man.

The participants at the Round Table were convinced that the experiences of the East-West Major Project should be continued and even enlarged under a new form. This new formulation could well correspond to ideals such as those expressed by Jawaharlal Nehru when he said:

*When discussions take place on the concept of man, the Eastern ideal or the Western ideal, they are very interesting to me from a historical point of view, from a cultural point of view, although I have always resisted this idea of dividing the world into the Orient and the Occident. I feel that differences have crept in or have been intensified by the process of industrialization and mechanization.*

Accordingly, the East-West Major Project could be expanded in two directions. It would go beyond the terms of the dialogue between the East and the West and consider the original values and the specific problems related to individual cultures and their mutual relations. On the other hand, it would also consider the cultural values produced by each civilization not merely as a heritage from the past, but as a living experience directly related to the building of a nation and to its economic and social development.

A number of suggestions were made for publications resulting from the Round Table and in general relating to Nehru's thought and work. Some

of these may be mentioned specifically:

- (i) *Publication of discussions held at the Round Table has been entrusted to the Indian National Commission for Unesco.*
- (ii) *Nehru's writings and speeches on international understanding and peace should be translated into various languages.*
- (iii) *A book on the mind of Nehru, containing extracts from his speeches and writings, in particular bearing upon the subject of international co-operation and peace (similar to the publication brought out by Unesco on Gandhi) may be published for wide dissemination in different languages.*
- (iv) *Further meetings dealing with aspects of Nehru's thinking should be organized. These could be linked with:*
  - (a) *Problems of national development*  
and
  - (b) *Scientific humanism.*

Our colleague from the United States, Dr. Paul J. Braisted, who had to leave this morning, made an interesting suggestion that Unesco should confer with the Government of India with a view to finding out ways and means of implementing the recommendations of the report of the Indian Education Commission chaired by Dr. D.S. Kothari. Since Unesco provided valuable support to the Commission in the

and Consultants and technical services, its continued interest in the work of carrying out the agreed recommendations would be very appropriate.

In the end, it is my very pleasant duty to thank our distinguished guests and all participants and observers who attended the sessions of the Round Table and contributed to its success. Several of my colleagues referred to the high level of discussions. As I said earlier, we in the Indian National Commission have greatly benefited by it. Its conclusions were reached in a spirit of friendship and goodwill that prevailed throughout the Round Table. I would like to express a word of tribute to our very able and charming Chairman, Madame Alva Myrdal, who steered the discussions with great understanding and sympathy. She was very ably supported by the Vice-Chairman, Prince Prem Purachatra, who is no stranger to India. A heavy burden has been placed upon our Rapporteur, Balram Nanda, who is well known for his writings on Nehru and Gandhi. I would also like to thank the secretariat of the National Commission for working very hard while preparing for the Round Table and arranging for the meetings.

Before I conclude, I would like to remind this gathering of the immense interest our Education Minister, Shri M.C. Chagla, took in the Round Table but he has unfortunately been prevented from taking part in it due to illness. I am sure the participants of the Round Table and those gathered here would like to send him a message wishing speedy recovery from his illness.

Mr. Vice-President, we are greatly honoured by your gracious presence

at this valedictory session of the Round Table, and we are grateful that you could come here today. Your leadership for years in Unesco affairs and your great eminence in the fields of education and culture make your presence here most appropriate.

# Valedictory Address

by

ZAKIR HUSAIN

You have accorded me a great honour by inviting me to attend the concluding session of your Round Table and to deliver a valedictory address. The occasion is such as to make one very thoughtful indeed. You have discussed, for the guidance of our own generation and of generations to come, the values represented in the life and work of one who was with us till a few years back, one who was so much with us that we still look around for him and wonder why he is not there. For years Jawaharlal Nehru had dedicated himself to making us aware of the aim and purpose of the inspired, dynamic life. He made us choose deliberately an economic and social system, a relationship with other nations, and an attitude towards moral and spiritual problems that would enable us to realize to the full not only the values embodied in our own traditions but also the aspirations that we share with all mankind. You have at this meeting thrown light on the manifold aspects of his personality and ideas, and I have no doubt that now and again the light falling from different directions re-created the luminous figure that Jawaharlal Nehru was for most of his life.

I believe I would not be wrong if I said that it was as a fighter for Indian freedom that Jawaharlal Nehru discovered himself. The dedication of his energies to the service of his country was something that came to him naturally, when once a situation had been created where a choice had to be made. In his childhood he had imbibed the rich environment of his parental home which represented all that was best in the composite Indo-Muslim culture of India, a product of long centuries of cultural synthesis to which were recently added valuable elements of the new English influence in Indian life. We do not have much factual data about this period, but all through his life Nehru remained true to that heritage and his instinctive understanding of the various communities that form the variegated pattern of our national life was one of our greatest assets. He had been preparing himself for his vocation even when he was at Harrow and Cambridge. He was preparing to serve India, but he was being unconsciously converted into an Englishman! These impressionable years spent in Europe did indeed lay the foundations of his modern, scientific, socialistic outlook. But the break with the national tradition must have made him feel rather awkward. He describes in a characteristically frank passage his condition on his return from England: "I returned from England after a long stay there. I had imbibed most of the prejudices of Harrow and Cambridge and in my likes and dislikes I was, perhaps, more an Englishman than an Indian. I looked upon the world almost from an English standpoint—as much prejudiced in

favour of England and the English as it was possible for an Indian to be." This feeling leads to an inner confusion, to restless questioning of oneself. Nehru says in another place:

*India was in my blood and there was much in her that instinctively thrilled me. And yet I approached her almost as an alien critic, full of dislike for the present as well as for many of the relics of the past that I saw. To some extent I came to her via the West and looked at her as a friendly westerner would have done. I was eager and anxious to change her outlook and appearance and give her the garb of modernity. And yet doubts arose within me. Did I know India—I who presumed to scrap much of her past heritage? There was a great deal that had to be scrapped, that must be scrapped; but surely India could not have been what she undoubtedly was and could not have continued a cultural existence for thousands of years, if she had not possessed something very vital and enduring, something that was worthwhile. What was this something?*

It was in this state of mind that Nehru came to Gandhiji and found in him the India which he was himself slowly, laboriously discovering. This is not the time to indulge in detailed documentation. But, as I see it, some of the salient features of Nehru's work in the fight for freedom and in the building up of a new life in India can be traced unmistakably to the Great Master. They are his fearlessness, and adherence to Truth; his acceptance of the Gandhian position that the ends do not justify the means, that noble aims cannot be achieved by ignoble means; the moral human orientation of all his endeavour; his acceptance of the methods of persuasion in preference to those of force; his commitment to set his people free, all his people without distinction of caste or creed or class; his belief that no nation can be truly free as long as there are some others in bondage and the consequent determination to put forth all possible efforts to liberate subject peoples; and his vision of India as an integral part of a free world community.

This association had a unique quality, worthy of deep study. I would simplify matters perhaps if we regarded it as the relationship of master and disciple. But that would not be the precise truth. Both Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru had fully independent minds, they defined values and formulated ideas in their own way, they agreed and they disagreed, but neither was willing to sacrifice the higher cause for the lower, and their co-operation became far more fruitful than it would have been if the disciple had let the master think for him. The disciple was the younger person, vigorous in his self-expression, but utterly convinced that there was no disagreement between him and his master, the elder, the more experienced, the wiser and in some unfathomable way the stronger person, as regards the ends to be achieved and the means to be adopted for achieving them. They had both the very deepest love for their people, but their thought and action were governed by an overriding loyalty to moral principles. They did not fight for the self-interest of their own people as against the self-interest of



not the argument that mattered but the conclusion. On the other hand, if the movement towards social justice was to have strength and momentum, it could not be limited to particular nations or particular regions. It had to become a means of integrating all the peoples of the world. Till India became independent, Jawaharlal Nehru endeavoured to create in the Indian people an awareness of the movements and of the significance of events in the outside world. He did this with an amazing measure of courage, patience and perseverance, for there were many who did not understand him, many who doubted the relevance of what he thought and said about international affairs to the situation and the tasks to be performed in India. But his vision and foresight received their reward when India became free. India did not join other independent nations as a stranger looking for contacts, but as an acknowledged representative of the ideals of universal freedom and social justice.

India was among the first members of the United Nations and Unesco. Jawaharlal Nehru insisted on India remaining within the Commonwealth although as a Republic. But as soon as India had won freedom, Nehru also became an ardent advocate for the freedom of all nations hitherto subject to imperialist rule. This was not political policy, not a search for alliances, not an attempt to create political and economic interests to balance other and possibly adverse interests. It was the enunciation of a moral principle, equally binding on all. And because Nehru firmly believed that it was the moral duty of all the free nations to extend the area of freedom he was equally firm in the belief that every people should have the right to choose their own means of giving expression to their idea of freedom and of social welfare. This meant necessarily a certain degree of dissociation from methods and motives that did not appear to harmonize with the concept of self-determination for each people, and with the essential conditions of freedom, non-violence and peace; it also meant, again necessarily, the acceptance of an obligation to strive for understanding and co-operation and of common effort to eradicate the evils of ignorance, poverty and fear. Nor alignment, *panch sheel* or any other term that we could think of would be but poor expressions for the nobility, the grace, the humane quality of Nehru's concept of understanding, tolerance and co-operation among nations.

If we asked him to indicate the concrete forms of the sentiments that inspired him, Nehru would without doubt have pointed to the U.N. and to Unesco. The United Nations represented for him humanity's resolve to eschew violence, to settle all disputes by peaceful methods, to promote welfare in every form throughout the world by means of assistance and co-operation, to raise the obligation to fulfil human needs above all other obligations. Unesco serves humanity in the same spirit in the fields of education, science and culture. Its function is to strengthen the foundations of peace in the minds of men, to mould their sentiments and aspirations in such a way as to make peaceful, co-operative living a part of their nature. It is also Unesco's function to promote that deeper understanding of men and ways of life which accepts and justifies the diversity of cultures and



creates the confidence among the representatives of these cultures that they are making a significant contribution to the wealth and variety and beauty of human life. It was with all this, and with the future of humanity in mind that Nehru on one occasion defined the role of Unesco:

*Man does not live by politics alone, nor, indeed, wholly by economics. And so Unesco came into being to represent something that was vital to human existence and progress. Even as the United Nations General Assembly represented the political will of the world community, Unesco tried to represent the finer and deeper sides of human life and, indeed, might be said to represent the conscience of the world community. . . .*

Nehru did not attach himself thoughtlessly or lazily to any doctrines, not even to those of his Master. A study of the letters that passed between them, of their differences and reconciliations, makes fascinating reading and displays the greatness and transparent honesty of both the master and the disciple.

It is the same in regard to his attraction to the teachings of Karl Marx. He had indeed been greatly influenced in his impressionable years by the Marxian analysis of social evolution. But he had seen, without waiting for disillusioning experience, that the Socialist programme in the developing countries could not be the same as the one foreseen by Marx for the industrialized countries of Western Europe in his time. It is futile, in my view, to attempt to classify him—as some people cannot resist the temptation to do—and to put on him this label or that of their choice. No simple label will cover him, he was himself.

Big capital-intensive industry in certain vital fields under state ownership was reconciled by him with decentralized change in privately owned agriculture as against collectivization, thus making it possible to promote the most efficient application of labour and other inputs to the available land in small holdings. For here it is not labour we have to serve but land; we have to increase production per acre not per man-hour. One may wonder if this way of going about it is the right one. I would like to tell you what John Strachey, whose testimony I value, said about this. He said: "I am making a bet if you like. I will bet that the Indian way of going about it will turn out to be the right one. They may have all sorts of failures and setbacks. But the Indian way of doing it will get much more sure and useful results than the way of collectivization."

And it was not only the anxiety to improve our material resources that concerned him. No one was more alive to the need of improving the people, of building up this social capital. During the period of his stewardship of Indian affairs great improvements were achieved. I wonder if some of you know that in about 15 years the number of our schools has gone up more than twofold from 230,000 to 503,000. The number of students in our schools has gone up almost thrice from 23½ millions in 1950 to some 68 millions. The intake of students of engineering and technology at the

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another nation, but for the universal values of freedom, justice and equality, for the building up of a political order that would be the reflection of a moral order. And together they created an ideal of patriotism which, while it brought freedom to their country, also sought to abolish all barriers created by narrow-mindedness, fear and hatred. In a historic speech, proclaiming his country's independence, Jawaharlal Nehru said:

*A moment comes, which comes but rarely in history, when we step out from the old to the new, when an age ends, and when the soul of a nation, long suppressed, finds utterance. It is fitting that at this solemn moment we take the pledge of dedication to the service of India and her people and to the still larger cause of humanity....*

*The past is over and it is the future that beckons to us now.... That future is not one of ease or resting but of incessant striving so that we may fulfil the pledges we have so often taken and the one we shall take today. The service of India means the service of the millions who suffer. It means the ending of poverty and ignorance and disease and inequality of opportunity. The ambition of the greatest man of our generation has been to wipe every tear from every eye. That may be beyond us, but so long as there are tears and suffering, so long our work will not be over.... And so we have to labour and to work, and work hard, to give reality to our dreams. These dreams are for India, but they are also for the world, for all the nations and peoples are too closely knit together today for any one of them to imagine it can live apart. Peace has been said to be indivisible; so is freedom, so is prosperity now, and so also is disaster in this One World that can no longer be split into isolated fragments.*

It is this sublimation of political aims that has given Indian democracy its particular character. Freedom has meant freedom for all people, equality has meant equal opportunity for all the people to live as full citizens and to take advantage, according to their capacity, of all the provisions made for education and employment. And by "all the people" we meant specifically those to whom so far the essential social rights and privileges had been denied, and whom a patriotism influenced and guided by dominant groups of wealth and class might have overlooked. To ensure that freedom and equality become real the state has taken the responsibility of regulating economic life and planning economic and educational development. The massiveness and the baffling difficulties of this undertaking were not ignored, but for Jawaharlal Nehru the application of the principle of social justice was a moral command so positive and absolute that its fulfilment could not be allowed to depend on favourable circumstances.

Quite early in his life, Jawaharlal Nehru realized that progress towards the attainment of social justice was not an accident of history. It was a basic human right that was being gradually acquired. Some might regard it as a natural right that could not be denied; some might regard it as an inevitable consequence of the unfolding of human thought and action. It was

not the argument that mattered but the conclusion. On the other hand, if the movement towards social justice was to have strength and momentum, it could not be limited to particular nations or particular regions. It had to become a means of integrating all the peoples of the world. Till India became independent, Jawaharlal Nehru endeavoured to create in the Indian people an awareness of the movements and of the significance of events in the outside world. He did this with an amazing measure of courage, patience and perseverance, for there were many who did not understand him, many who doubted the relevance of what he thought and said about international affairs to the situation and the tasks to be performed in India. But his vision and foresight received their reward when India became free. India did not join other independent nations as a stranger looking for contacts, but as an acknowledged representative of the ideals of universal freedom and social justice.

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degree level has risen from 4,000 to nearly 28,000, and at the diploma level from less than 6,000 to some 50,000; the number of practising doctors has risen from 56,000 to 86,000 and of practising nurses from 15,000 to 45,000 and so on.

It is the same story of fruitful synthesis in Nehru's attitude in the matter of nationalism and internationalism. It is the same when we think of the great part that Western science and culture had in his mental make-up, so beautifully harmonized with his deep reverence for the great past of his own country. His uniqueness indeed lay in the rich versatility and pervasiveness of his personality. Rarely had a life been endowed with such shining and variegated facets of mind and character. He was an astounding amalgam of outstanding intellectual abilities and supreme moral values; a man of thought with an infinite capacity for action; a born aristocrat with deep democratic commitment; a great man full of goodness. He was larger than life. In his upbringing, education, outlook as well as achievements, he represented a rich synthesis of East and West, of science and culture, of the hoary past and the modern age of science and technology. In spite of many seeming paradoxical traits of his complex character, there was an essential unity and harmony in his integrated personality from which stemmed his amazing dynamism in various walks of life.

No one can take another along a road he has not travelled himself with any success of direction. Jawaharlal Nehru thought his way through it all that he came to believe. If we look back along the road he travelled from early youth to maturity and wisdom, we shall discover the reason for his influence on his contemporaries. We find in him from the beginning that thoughtfulness, that sensitivity, that reverence which are essential for culture. The conviction that the freedom of India would bring freedom to a large part of mankind inspired him to take as active and effective a part in political life as was possible, but in the thick of the battle, where emotion could become violent, his mind remained clear and balanced. During frequent terms of imprisonment he did not fume and fret, but devoted himself to study and writing. His energy was phenomenal. We see in him, as in Mahatma Gandhi, that dedication to duty and that detachment from results which are the qualities of the truly moral person. He was also supremely realistic in emphasizing the need to fulfil material wants. This fulfilment could not come except through the development of science and technology. But he gave constant warning of the destructive potentialities of science and technology, and also of their possible futility. "The problems we have to face," he once said, "many and complicated as they are, will never be solved except on the basis of good morals and conscience."

The ability to see all sides of a problem, the versatility which astonished all who met him and the awareness of all that occurred in almost every field of knowledge and activity had also perhaps a moral origin. For Jawaharlal Nehru it seemed to be man's duty to know everything which concerned men and with which men were concerned, for knowledge was indivisible like the world, like mankind, like life. One could not understand the part unless

one studied the whole. This conviction produced a phenomenon that is very rare indeed—a man with a stimulating awareness of all that is human, all that is significant, a man in love with mankind, a man with a confident, enchanting smile.

He was not a doctrinaire and he left behind no dogma. He has opened up many an avenue for his people and for his fellow men along which they will find their way themselves. We could truly say of him what he said of Gandhiji:

*Gandhi was something much bigger than all one had imagined him to be. He had that remarkable quality of allowing and even encouraging those who were privileged to follow him to think out their problems—with his guidance to them, of course—but to come to their own decisions and to act more according to their own light, even though that light may be dim. He did not want to impose himself on anyone. He certainly wanted to win the minds and hearts of people in his own way, which was not that of imposition. He did not want people to suppress and compress themselves and blindly say or do what he said. That was not the kind of following he wanted. . . . So when problems come, it becomes our duty, I imagine, to come to our own decisions about them, keeping in view, of course, whatever we have learnt from him, but to come to our own decisions and not take shelter in something that he might have said under different circumstances or on a different occasion.*

Yes, Jawaharlal Nehru has left no doctrines, no dogmas behind to oblige mental slovenliness. He has left behind the memory of a free life well lived, a life full of activity and refinement. He has left behind a climate of dedicated endeavour and moral aspiration. May it be given to us to grow each in his own way in that climate and make it an enduring feature of our world situation.

## List of Participants

H.E. Mr. Omar Abou-Richeh is Ambassador of Syria to India. He is also a Member of the Academy of Letters, Damascus, and author of three volumes of Arabic poetry which have been translated into a number of European languages.

Dr. Paul J. Braisted is President of the Hazen Foundation, U.S.A. He has been a missionary in South India (1927-30) and is author of *Indian Nationalism and the Christian Colleges*.

H.E. M. Jean Daridan is Ambassador of France to India. He is the author of a book on Abraham Lincoln and has received two prizes from Academie Francaise.

Rt. Hon. John Freeman, M.B.E., is the British High Commissioner in India and a former Editor of *New Statesman*, London.

Prof. B.G. Gafurov is Director of the Institute of Asian Peoples, Moscow, which functions under the Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R. He is also President of the "Orient Occident" Committee of the National Commission for Unesco.

Dr. Soliman Huzayyin has been Rector of the University of Assiut. He has held many high offices in the U.A.R. Government.

Dr. Clovis Maksoud was until recently Head of the Mission of the League of Arab States in India and Southeast Asia.

H.E. Mrs. Alva Myrdal is Sweden's Ambassador at large and chief delegate to the U.N. Disarmament Conference in Geneva. She represented her country in India (1955-1961) and earlier directed the Department of Social Sciences, Unesco.

Prof. Hajime Nakamura is Dean of the Faculty of Letters, University of Tokyo, and has written extensively on Indian and Buddhist philosophy.

H.E. Senor Octavio Paz is Ambassador of Mexico to India. A poet and a critic of arts, literature and culture, he has published many books in different languages. He has been founder, director and editor of several literary reviews.

Prince Prem Purachattra is Chairman of the Mass Communication Committee of the Thai National Commission for Unesco.



Prof. Otto von Simson *has been a Member of the Executive Board of Unesco since 1960 and is also Vice-President of the German National Commission. He has written books on Byzantine mosaics and Gothic architecture.*

Mr. Stephen Spender, *poet and critic, is a former editor of Encounter and Horizon. He is Consultant in Poetry to the U.S. Library of Congress, and has also been Counsellor in the Section of Letters, Unesco (1947).*

## INDIA

*Shrimati Indira Gandhi is Prime Minister of India.*

*H.E. Cardinal Valerian Gracias is Archbishop of Bombay. He has been a Member of the Pontifical Commission for the Study of Family and Population Problems. He is author of The Vatican and International Policy and The Decline of Public Morals.*

*Shri Asoka Mehta was previously Minister of 1 of India, and is now Minister of Petroleum, Chemicals. He has written widely on problems of socialism and 1.*

*Shri V.K. Krishna Menon has represented India at the Un and at many other international conferences. He has also been missioner to the U.K. and Defence Minister of India.*

*Shrimati Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit has been India's Ambassador in Moscow, Washington and London. She was President of the United Nations General Assembly in 1953-54. She is author of The Evolution of India (Whidden Lectures), 1958.*

*Shri M. Chalapathi Rau is Editor of National Herald, a newspaper founded by Jawaharlal Nehru. He is author of several books and articles on Nehru and his times, including a one-volume study of Gandhi and Nehru.*

*Shri Romesh Thapar edits Seminar, New Delhi. He is also Honorary Director of the India International Centre and Chairman of the National Book Development Council.*

## FORMER CHAIRMAN OF EAST-WEST ADVISORY COMMITTEE

*(invited by Director-General, Unesco, to participate)*

*Shri P.N. Kirpal is Secretary of Education, Government of India, and Secretary-General of the Indian National Commission for Unesco. He is also a Member of the Executive Board of Unesco.*

## REPRESENTATIVE OF THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL, UNESCO

*Mr. Mahdi Elmandjra is Assistant Director-General of Unesco for Social Sciences, Human Sciences and Culture.*

## PARTICIPATING OBSERVERS

Shri P.N. Dhar, *Director, Institute of Economic Growth, Delhi.*

Shri Sham Lal, *Resident Editor, The Times of India, New Delhi.*

Shri S.L. Poplai, *Secretary-General, Indian Council of World  
New Delhi.*

Shri H.Y. Sharda Prasad, *Deputy Information Adviser, Prime Minister's  
Secretariat, New Delhi.*

Shri K. Natwar Singh, *Deputy Secretary, Prime Minister's Secretariat,  
New Delhi.*